

A Complete Novelette "The Comedy at Corona"

The SMART SET

*A Magazine of
Cleverness*

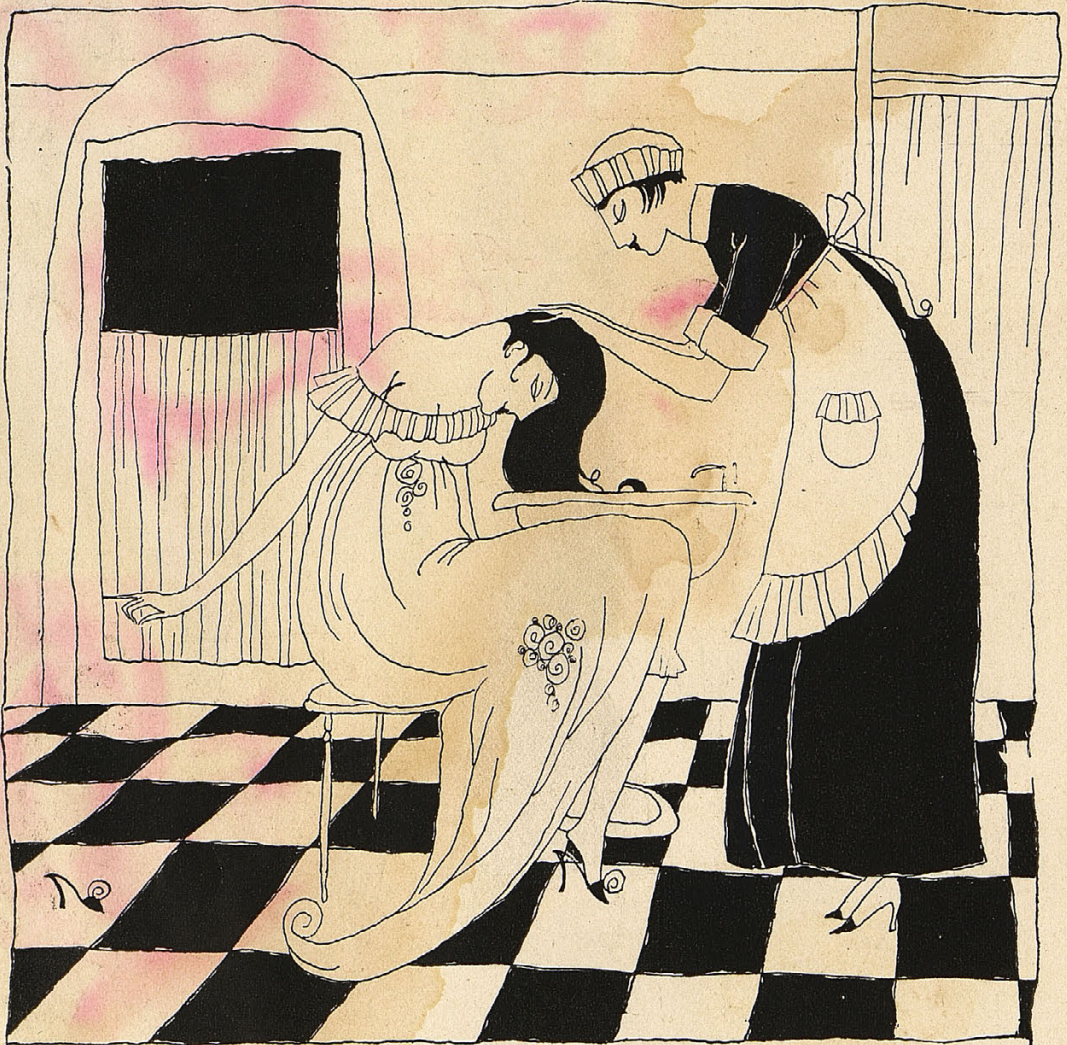


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Vol. XLVI

AUGUST, 1915

No. 4

THE SMART SET

Edited by
GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

and
H. L. MENCKEN

Manuscripts must be addressed, "Editors of THE SMART SET"

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HALF A HUNDRED BURLESQUES, EPIGRAMS, POEMS, SHORT SATIRES, ETC.

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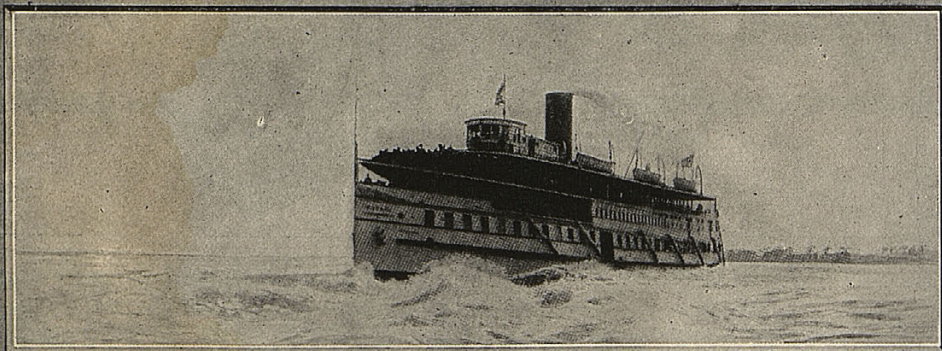
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"A Full Honeymoon"

These feature short stories

I

"THIRTY DAYS HATH SEPTEMBER," by Frank R. Adams, author of "The Happy Ending," "Le Bohème," "The Categorical Imperative" and other Smart Set stories.

II

"PAPA SATAN," by Alicia Ramsey, author of "The Peacemaker," the Smart Set novelette which attracted widespread attention last autumn.

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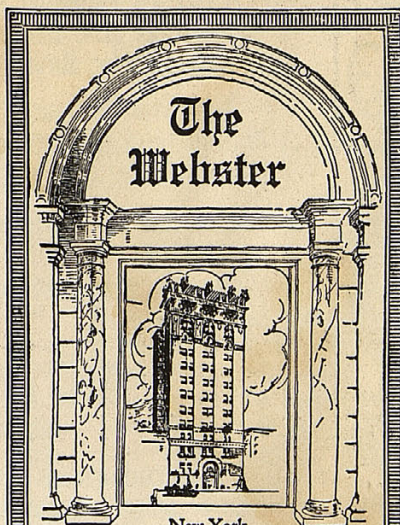
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THE SMART SET

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A MAD WORLD, MY MASTERS!

By Morris Gilbert

COLUMBINE was lost. That is, she was separated from her friends. As a matter of fact, the whole trouble was that she was in the twentieth century and didn't know it.

She stood, a rather *gauche* figure, at 42nd Street and Broadway and looked around. When people stand there for the first time it is customary for them to be amazed—"The riot, the glamour, the colour of it all . . ." and so on. But Columbine was not amazed. She really wasn't sensitive enough to be. She was still in the mental state of discussing Shakespeare and the musical glasses with the other early Victorians.

At any rate, Columbine stood there. Perhaps she wore a tippet. She would have, certainly, if it had been the season for tippets. She had half-mitts on anyhow. It was early afternoon. Matinée crowds surged past. Columbine didn't know it, but she was a little bewildered. If she had known it she would have been amazed, but as I said before her perceptions had not reached that stage yet.

As she stood looking for her friends she was thinking of the good days

when she had played with Harlequin and Scaramouche and that brazen creature, Pierrette, and that gay dog, Pierrot. Those were wonderful times indeed. Then her troupe had been the admiration of the wide world. Its members wore the most dashing, piquant costumes, danced the gayest, most alluring dances, said and did the wittiest things imaginable. When it was bruited that the troupe was about to enter a town—Hey Presto! the town was *en fête*! And wherever it went was gala-day. How the world laughed at the clown's roast goose. How it envied Pierrot. How it loved Columbine. Yes, even this little *gauche* figure in a tippet (perhaps) and certainly in half-mitts, standing on the corner of 42nd Street and Broadway.

Suddenly Columbine's eye caught a sparkle of familiar color. Black and red in wide vertical stripes. It was a dainty svelte Watteau creature that was approaching. Twentieth century reader, you and I know that it wasn't Pierrette, but just a lovely flapper coming down Broadway. Columbine, however much she disliked Pierrette, nevertheless was overjoyed to see what

seemed to be an old comrade. So she fluttered up crying "Pierrette! Pierrette!"

The flapper stopped and opened her eyes wide. Columbine almost sobbed when she saw her mistake, but she managed to ask the flapper if she knew Pierrette.

"No, I don't," answered the flapper icily. "But there's a jane up on the Ziegfeld roof that flags by that name. Her real monicker is Hawkes."

Columbine was desolate and started walking up Broadway. After a while she came to a theater. It was so different from the village greens where she had acted, so richly decorated, so spacious, so shiny, that she had to stop and look. She wandered rather forlornly around the lobby.

Suddenly there came a sound that made her heart flutter. It was the voice—the warm, rich voice—of Pierrot! And it was calling her name. Having been brought up on Bulwer-Lytton, Columbine could scarcely believe her ears. But then again came the cry. It was certainly Pierrot, but where was he? For a moment she looked in vain, and then she saw him. He was behind a little wicketed window in the wall. With a cry she flung through a door near the window. It was marked "Manager's Office, Private," but it led to Pierrot.

Next instant she was in his arms sobbing happily. What an instant that was! To Columbine, Pierrot was no longer light and fickle. To Pierrot, Columbine was no longer dull. They remembered that they had been comrades together.

After a period, Columbine, calm and happy, began to notice things. First of all she noticed that Pierrot was stouter than of old. Besides he was not dressed in the garish silken be-ribboned clothes he used to affect. He wore a checked

suit and a neat bow tie, and diamonds glittered on the chubby fingers of the erstwhile impecunious stroller.

Volubly the questions rose to Columbine's lips. What was Pierrot doing here? Where was Scaramouche? And Harlequin, and Pierrette? Pierrot consigned the box-office to an assistant, took Columbine on his knee and explained to her. Perhaps he uttered the secret of Gotham's decade.

"You see, Columbine," he said, "Quite a while ago our little dramas began to pall on the world. People had come to see our pretty clothes, to hear our jokes, to watch our funny love-making. But at last they began to tell our jokes themselves and quite outdid us in their costumes. And the naughtinesses and frivolity of their love-making quite made us shudder. They got tired of us and our ingenuous frolic, so we saw we must change. So instead of being gay and light, we became earnest and tawdry and solid. We began to act the life that the world had led while the world in turn became like us. And with our commonplaces we amused them still. At last I grew so rich that I bought a theater and became a producer. Pierrette had been a mannequin, but she was soon made designer for an expensive atelier. All she does all day is to draw pictures of the odd things she used to wear and throw away, which she sells to young and old ladies. As for Scaramouche—he never was very witty or gay—he writes the plays I produce. And so we prosper. . . Really it's very simple. . . Strollers like we were don't act any more, but look—"

Columbine looked. Pierrot was right. Fifty-one Pierrots, thirty-seven Pierrettes, and seventeen Columbines were all fluttering down Broadway. At least that's all Columbine could see from where she sat.



THE COMEDY AT CORONADO

By Austin Adams

"PHEW!" She dropped, panting, upon the rustic chair the dapper old boy placed for her and looked the reproof she lacked the breath to utter.

"Wait, my dear Mrs. West," protested the admiral; "second wind directly."

"But it's murder—making me climb that awful trail!" She delved in her bag for her vanity kit and the admiral beat a retreat to the edge of the cliff and gazed down at the view. It was superb. From this high perch above the precipitous wall of Point Loma one sees the gleaming peninsula of Coronado, dividing the amethyst bay of San Diego from the sapphire sea outside; the fair sub-tropical city as if asleep upon the terraces sloping eastward to the foothills; and along two-thirds of the horizon the tumbling masses and peaks of mountains, half of them in Mexico, their fretted outlines opalescent against the Italian blue sky.

"Ah, but just look at that view," argued the admiral, returning only after seeing powder-puff and tiny mirror deposited in the bag and evidences of restored self-satisfaction on the face—deucedly pretty face, eh, what?—of the smartest woman at the hotel. "Just look at that view, Mrs. West; isn't it heavenly?"

"Yes—but the trouble with heaven is that it's such a bother to get there."

"I warned you, but you would come."

"My dear Admiral, don't you know that the surest way to make a woman do anything is to warn her not to do it?"

"Croft doesn't seem to be at home," dodged the admiral, creating the de-

sired diversion by beginning to explore the outside of this oddest of all studios.

"Then do something; knock; sing out," urged Mrs. West, smiling as she watched him trapse across toward the door, gingerly protecting his patent-leather booties from the jagged rocks. As a distinguished-service veteran of the flotilla of flirts found at all naval bases, Mrs. Stella West, thirty, stunning and a good fellow, fully appreciated Rear-Admiral Trench, U.S.N., retired, sixty-five, debonaire and ranking officer of the old guard of veranda beaux at the Hotel del Coronado, where she was convalescing after her last divorce. Gallant, peppery, every inch of his five-foot-four an officer and a gentleman, the dear old boy was a joy. Also, the admiral knew how to select his tailor and haberdasher, and how to brush his wisps of iron-gray hair smartly forward above his aristocratic ears. Right in every sense, Admiral Trench.

"Nowhere about, apparently," he reported after beating a rat-tat-tat with his cute little bamboo stick on the studio door.

"Goodness!" cried Mrs. West. "What can we do?"

"Wait—and obey orders!" snapped the admiral, *à la* quarter deck.

"Aye, aye, sir," laughed Stella, straightening and saluting.

"Charming spot Croft has up here—what?"

"Yes—for a picnic; but for a honeymoon! Is Kathy crazy?"

"No—romantic."

"Poor thing! And this Mr. Croft—is he romantic, too?"

"No—crazy—but clever, clever as the devil."

"So Kathy tells me. What is he like?"

"Haven't you met Croft? He's down at the hotel a good deal—selling his pictures, you know."

"Those weird things the women rave over?"

"Precisely. Sell like hot cakes, too—fetch all sorts of prices—though nobody knows exactly what they're pictures of."

"That's why they sell," chuckled Mrs. West; "but how does Kathy happen to know him so well and swallow him like a dyspepsia tablet?"

"He gives her painting lessons and they're constantly together."

"Not up here, I hope."

"Yes; why not?"

With a virtuous gasp ending in the sigh of worldly wisdom she looked up at the admiral with wide-open eyes and then shook her head before murmuring: "That girl needs a mother."

"A need, my dear Mrs. West," came back the admiral, lifting his natty Panama hat and bowing as lovers bowed in early Victorian novels, "that I beg you will supply, now that you've got your decree."

"Interlocutory decree," she laughed; "the final one is not due till next winter."

"And then—?"

She cocked her pretty head, pursed her pretty lips, wafted him a kiss with the tips of her pretty fingers, and said: "We'll see—*then!* But tell me: do you actually let Kathy come up here with this man—alone?"

"Of course; why not? Safer up here, isn't she, than among those hotel butterflies. You don't know what goes on down there."

"Don't I?"

"Well, virtue that must be watched isn't—isn't virtue."

"Virtue!" sneered Mrs. West. "Anybody can be virtuous; most women are; but how many of them are happy? That's the point! Kathy's not happy—yes, don't look so scared!—she's *not* happy. I'm awfully afraid the girl is thinking."

"Thinking!" volleyed the admiral, aimlessly, into the fog.

"No woman can afford to think. Just who and what is this Croft?"

"You've seen his pictures—crazy; and just look at that!" answered the admiral, pointing his stick up at the sign, a rough-hewn slab of wood creaking from a rusty iron crane above the studio door, with the words "Puck's Perch" burned into it. "That's the man—perches up here like Puck to look down on the rest of us; paints what isn't so, but makes you believe it is so; and does perfectly impossible things in a perfectly delightful way. In short, crazy; crazy, but clever."

"Ah!" she exclaimed; "I see—a genius!"

"And an ass—but the sort of an ass who gives you a sneaking idea that it's you who are the ass. B-r-r-r-r!"

"How long has he been giving Kathy painting lessons?"

Before the admiral could reply a rich baritone voice was heard far down the trail on the face of the cliff, lustily chanting the prologue out of "Pagliacci." It was clear that the singer was coming up the trail and coming fast.

"Here he comes now," muttered the admiral, withdrawing to the farther side of the little ledge and beckoning Mrs. West to follow. "Don't, for heaven's sake, get him started on any argument."

"Never fear," she replied, smiling; "I don't argue; I decide."

II

UNAWARE of the invasion by distinguished visitors of his eyrie, Quentin Croft swung himself along the zigzag trail, down which he would have gone much faster had he known of their presence. What society he needed for purposes of target practice he sought and found in great abundance at the sumptuous caravansarai over there across the water; "Puck's Perch" was sacredly reserved for the few free humans cast by the Japan current or other influences upon the desecrated shores of Southern California. Thirty-five,

tanned by wind and sun, care-free, simple and imperturbable as nature, Croft was so sure of his own convictions that he remained blissfully indifferent to those of others, especially if those others entertained views—how he loathed “views”!—views deserving and sure to receive the Chautauqua salute at any gathering of persons consciously cultured and admittedly the ripest specimens of civilization.

“Ah, Admiral, delighted!” cried Croft, as his head emerged above the parapet of native rock, and hastening, hat in hand, to greet his guests. “Patriotism condescending to honor art!” Unslinging his tin color-box from his shoulder he placed it with the collapsible easel and an unfinished sketch against a jutting rock.

“Rubbish!” snorted the admiral. “Let me present you. Mrs. West, Mr. Croft.”

“Mrs. West,” murmured Croft in perfect form.

“Charmed!” murmured Mrs. West in perfect truth, for her expert eye at one glance took in and duly approved the magnificent Greek, from pigskin puttees and war-correspondent khakis to Baden-Powell sombrero and—oh, joy!—correct cut of hair. Fully expecting a vision of the Byronic eccentricities proper to the artistic temperament, she beheld *this*!

“I sighted Mrs. West, you know, Croft, among a whole fleet of hotel gossips, bore down on ‘em, captured her and convoyed her up here,” reported the admiral, forcing the fog-tone into his voice.

“Ananias!” retorted Mrs. West, shaking her finger at the quarter deck. “It was I who saw the admiral getting under way, hailed him, literally boarded him and made him transport me here, for I’ve been dying to meet you.”

“What! Fashion as well as patriotism stooping to notice art?”

“Oh, please don’t be nice,” pleaded Mrs. West. “Everybody says you are shocking, and I’m crazy to be shocked. Forgive me.”

“Forgive you?” laughed Croft. “On

the contrary, I bless you. The hope of society is the woman who insists upon her right to be shocked. Now that woman is becoming curious at last, we may hope that the—”

“Woman becoming curious!” broke in the admiral. “Why, man—”

“I mean it, Admiral,” Croft interrupted. “In the past man was curious and we got lies; in the future woman will be curious and we’ll get life.”

Mrs. West smiled at the admiral’s purple pucker of disdain and then turned to Croft and said: “No wonder the women all adore you, Mr. Croft.”

“Oh, they don’t, I assure you,” he protested seriously. “The few women who know what I’m talking about do not adore me; they merely begin to see through their husbands.”

“Good Lord, Croft,” exploded the admiral. “I hope you don’t talk to my daughter that way!”

“No, Admiral; she talks to me that way.”

“Dee-licious!” cried Mrs. West, while the admiral sputtered incoherently. “Do go on, Mr. Croft!”

When the laugh permitted and all danger of impending apoplexy made it safe to engage the flagship once more, Croft remarked: “By the way, Admiral, since we’re speaking of Kathy, I owe you an apology for never having credited you with a stroke of genius. Kathy tells me that it was you who gave her the nickname of ‘Tell-Me.’ Great!”

“Rubbish! She took the name by force. Her very first words were ‘tell me,’ and she’s been known as Tell-Me Trench ever since, for the young torment won’t let up on you until you do tell her—everything.”

“Yes,” commented Croft, “isn’t she unladylike—wanting to know the truth?”

“Well,” supplemented Mrs. West, “wherever she got the name, she certainly lives up to it. The other day I heard her ask the bishop if it was true that marriages are made in Heaven; and when he assured her that it was true, she asked him how it happened that Heaven had allowed Solo-

mon to have hundreds of wives, the admiral only one at a time, and the bishop none at all."

Under cover of the admiral's virtuous "tut, tut, tut!" Croft asked Mrs. West, "Did the bishop clear up the difficulty?"

"No," she replied; "he cleared his throat and then cleared out."

"And what did Kathy do?"

"She winked at me."

"B-r-r-r-r!" grumbled the admiral.

"Well, you know, Admiral," Croft explained, "a wink in a woman is worth two in a man."

"Rubbish! Change the subject."

"Done!" agreed Croft. "Has either of you seen my new picture, 'Sunset'?"

"I have—marvelous!" cried Mrs. West.

"That's the word—marvelous," the admiral joined in. "Heavens and earth! Croft, the sun never set that way since the creation, and you know it hasn't."

"That's true," admitted Croft quietly, "but now that I've shown them how beautifully it can set, don't you think they'll have it set that way one of these days?"

"You're hopeless, Croft, hopeless!"

Once more the laugh stopped the banter and, when it was over, Mrs. West precipitated the practical by saying, "Don't forget the time, Admiral. I'm afraid it's getting late."

"Ah, yes, yes! I was forgetting. Well, Croft, I came up here to turn you out of house and home."

Betraying no more than mild curiosity, Croft replied, "Delighted, of course—but—?"

"I want to rent this perch of yours for a brief honeymoon."

"A honeymoon!" exclaimed Croft, glancing congratulatingly from one guest to the other; "not—?"

"Goodness! no; not guilty," protested Mrs. West. "Do explain, Admiral, explain."

"It's for Kathy; she's to be married, you know, Croft."

"Kathy!—married?—to whom?" inquired Croft, his mildly interested air

deceiving the admiral, but not Mrs. West.

"To Lieutenant Randolph Lee, sir, of the United States Navy, sir," announced Rear-Admiral Trench, U.S.N., stiffening proudly.

"I see—for the good of the service," mused Croft, declining the challenge of Mrs. West's eye.

"You knew of the engagement, didn't you, Croft?" asked the admiral after a somewhat disconcerting silence. "Don't you and Kathy discuss everything?"

"Dear me! no; we discuss only the good, the true and the beautiful," answered Croft, again master of his citadel. "You say she wants to surrender to the world, the flesh and the navy up here at 'Puck's Perch'? Ye gods!"

"Absurd, of course," acquiesced the father of an only daughter, "but you know what she is—stubborn as a mule. I hope you'll let her have the place for a few days."

"Oh, the place is hers, without the asking, but I was wondering if the course of true love might not prove rather bumpy up here, for the shack wasn't originally intended for a nuptial bower."

"I should say not!" ventured Mrs. West when Croft's eye sought hers; "and what's a honeymoon without modern conveniences?"

"Better talk her out of it, Admiral," suggested Croft boldly.

"I'd like to see anybody talk that girl out of anything," grumbled the admiral, as one having experience. "She'd probably call off the whole thing and give poor Lee the sack if she can't have the wedding up here. Just what accommodations have you, Croft—sleeping accommodations, I mean? You sleep, I take it, somewhere?"

"Yes—certainly I sleep—out of doors."

"Good heavens!" blushed Mrs. West prettily; "that would never do."

"And there's no kitchen to speak of," went on Croft pleasantly.

"That's so," growled the admiral,

"you don't eat like a Christian, do you?"

"No," laughed Croft, "my brain is quite clear, you observe."

"But there must be a kitchen of some sort," stormed the admiral.

"There is—of one sort."

"And a bath?" modestly inquired Mrs. West.

Croft pointed proudly down at the blue waters of the bay and said, "A bath? The best ever. There it is!"

"What!" cried Mrs. West. "No, Admiral, this really won't do."

"But, confound it all," retorted the admiral, "if the child will not listen to reason she must take the consequences. You heard how she went on."

"Yes, I know, but really this will never do, never!"

After another period of oppressive silence Croft, confident that an air of apologetic hospitality would be understood as an offer of a defensive and offensive alliance by Mrs. West, thoughtfully suggested that it might be well for her to have a look through the premises, "Just to see if the place can possibly be made fit for love's young dream." She beamed her understanding, signaled her acceptance, and said that she did think it might be prudent for her, a woman, to survey the situation, "If you're sure you won't mind."

"Not in the least," laughed Croft; "poke around to your heart's content—but first let me go in and see that nothing too scandalously masculine is lying about."

Accordingly, he ran into the studio and had scarcely disappeared when Mrs. West, puzzling the admiral by sundry mysterious signs, betokening caution and forthcoming revelation, tiptoed quickly to his side and whispered, "There! What did I tell you?"

"Well, what did you tell me?"

"Sh-h! Not so loud. It's just as I said: that man is in love with Kathy, and I'll bet you anything that she—"

"Rubbish! I do wish you women wouldn't—ahem!"

The sudden opening of the studio

door and the painter's emergence therefrom stopped the admiral and caused Mrs. West to glide from his side to lose herself in rapturous contemplation of the view.

"All serene, Mrs. West," Croft sang out; "go in and learn the worst."

"Thank you so much!" she replied, running across to the door, which he held open for her to enter. "I'll only be a minute or two."

III

AFTER ceremoniously bowing her in to the studio and shutting the door, Croft slowly filled his pipe—a very nice operation with him—and lit it before strolling over to where the admiral stood, puzzling over the unfinished sketch which he had just discovered leaning against the rocks. For some little time the artist remained silently puffing and watching the critic, as he, manifestly more and more puzzled, held the canvas at arm's length and turned it, now at one angle and now at another.

"Rather a striking conception, don't you think?" Croft asked, finally, between puffs.

"What in the name of bedlam is it supposed to be?"

"Unless you can suggest a better name," quietly answered Croft, "I think of calling it 'Conventionality.'"

"Hm!" muttered the admiral, eyeing Croft warily. "Translate."

"Well, you see, sir, it's a great cliff that has stood solid for ages, but the waves are undermining it at last and it's about to topple into the sea."

"But I can't make head nor tail out of the damn thing."

"No wonder!" exclaimed Croft, coming close to the admiral and looking over his shoulder at the picture; "you're holding it upside down."

"Oh, a-a-am I?" stammered the admiral, with much embarrassment, turning the sketch other side up. "How stupid of me!"

"Not at all; not stupid—quite natural and proper," protested Croft with no

trace of irony. "How many people look at conventionality right side up?"

"Rubbish!"

"What a whopping old rubbish pile you must have accumulated, Admiral, during your long and observant life!" chuckled Croft, taking the sketch and placing it as before.

"B-r-r-r! What can be keeping Mrs. West so long? Do go and call her."

"No; let her demonstrate the risk Miss Kathy is running in this proposed honeymoon up here. Pardon my impertinence, Admiral, but isn't it all rather sudden?"

"Sudden!" snorted the admiral. "Been engaged three years, and I've no use for long engagements—dead against nature, you know, and apt to run aground in the end. So when Lee's ship made port unexpectedly this morning I decided to have it over and done with."

"You decided?" inquired Croft, incredulously.

"Of course! Who should decide it but her own father?"

"Kathy is so alarmingly unconventional that I feared she might decide to decide it herself."

"Oh, see here, Croft," thundered the admiral, "I'm too good an American to take any stock in the way parents in Europe manage these things. I didn't pick out a husband for my daughter; no, sir! It was a case of love at first sight."

"I've read, somewhere, that there is such a thing," mused Croft.

"Yes, and we'll keep on falling in love as long as men are men and women are women. I know the rot they're giving us about eugenics, but, take it from me, Croft, a woman's heart is not subject to calculation."

"I'm afraid that's so," laughed Croft, "but don't you think a girl should know the difference between love and mere sex-instinct?"

"Faugh!" sneered the admiral. "I suppose you go in for all this stuff and nonsense about rational marriage—as if marriage could ever be rational!"

Croft roared. Always Rear-Admiral

Trench was a joy. About his conservatism and tap-rooted convictions there was none of the disheartening compromise and flirting with the current catch-words of radicalism so apparent among the latter-day cultured. The hotel swarmed with cavemen and cliff-dwellers, who, thanks to the Sunday supplements, fancied themselves devilishly "advanced." The admiral's innocence was sublimely impervious to light from any quarter, and his salvation rested upon the theological hope of invincible ignorance.

His laugh done, Croft asked, "Just who and what is this man whom Kathy took the hazard of loving without taking the time or the trouble to know anything about?"

"He's an officer and a gentleman, sir," reported Rear-Admiral Trench.

"I see," replied Croft. "She's going to marry a—a—a phrase!"

"The noblest phrase, sir, in the English language."

"Oh, it's a fine phrase—but as there's such a difference in officers, and so many kinds of gentlemen, I really can't quite—" He broke off short on seeing Mrs. West coming out of the studio, her hands raised in lugubrious protest.

"Well," asked the admiral, "how did you find things?"

"Awful—unspeakable—impossible!" she exclaimed. "Why, Admiral, it's not a human habitation: it's a cross between a gymnasium and a hospital—not one dainty or pretty or convenient thing in the whole unthinkable place!"

The admiral knit his bushy gray eyebrows and looked at Croft, who hastened to say, "It's fact, sir; there's absolutely nothing to collect dirt; not a microbe lurking anywhere about the place."

"No," glowered the admiral, "they're all in that cracked brain of yours."

"And what he calls a bedroom!" moaned Mrs. West. "Why, it's nothing but—"

"Fresh air," broke in Croft penitently.

"Nothing but wire netting tacked to four corner posts," went on Mrs. West.

"It's not a bedroom: it's a chicken-run. There's no privacy at all."

"But pray don't forget that my only neighbors are the stars," argued Croft, smiling blandly.

"There's a bed, isn't there?" asked the admiral.

"I just wish you could see that bed!" sighed Mrs. West.

"It's really not fit, Admiral," explained Croft. "You see, an old Yaqui Indian made it for me, with nothing in view but health and comfort."

Once again the admiral exploded, saying, when able at last to find the words, "You're a raving maniac and Kathy's an idiot! Got a telephone?"

"Certainly not," answered Croft, "but there's one at the wireless station—ten minutes' drive from here."

"Then I'm off to tell the little idiot that she is an idiot."

Shaking his fist at Croft and bowing to Mrs. West, the admiral darted to the top of the trail and had begun the descent before they realized his intention. From the edge of the cliff Croft, restraining Mrs. West from following in the wake of the flagship, made a megaphone of his two hands and hailed the chauffeur sitting in the car at the foot of the trail. Came a faint voice from the unseen depths, asking what was wanted. "The admiral wants to go to the wireless station—first turn to the left—can't miss it." Again the faint voice from below; the chauffeur knew the road. Presently was heard the chug of the motor and Croft knocked the ashes from his pipe, turned away from the parapet, indicated the rustic chair as the proper place for the sitting of the Inquisition, and thumbed the edge of his rapier of repartee in readiness for the combat he felt in his funny-bone was inevitable—and ticklish.

IV

For strategic reasons, Mrs. West passed the deal and waited for Croft to open. Experience had taught him that there is nothing like a general observation to draw the fire of a woman's

masked battery, locating it for him without giving her the range of his own position. So, after refilling his pipe with exquisite deliberation, he remarked that in these days it is a wise father that knows his own daughter, and that he would give a good deal to hear what the little idiot might say to the big one.

"Yes, so would I," replied Mrs. West as generally speaking as he, but instantly feeling for the range by adding, "I want to talk to you. Listen!"

"I'm listening," murmured Croft, as if almost interested—and the war was on.

"What's the answer?" she flashed, point-blank.

"What's the question?"

"You."

"I?"

"Yes—you interest me."

"I interest everybody—even myself."

"I like your conceit!"

"So do I."

She smiled up at him to give him to understand that two can play at any game, especially if the game be one of feint rather than force, and if the other one be, as in this case, the wisest woman he ever met. Then, lest he were not as clever as he pretended to be and so her smile be deprived of its significance, she asked, "Is it awfully nice to be clever?"

"Awfully," he replied solemnly.

"You are very clever, aren't you, Mr. Croft?"

"Very."

"I admire your nerve," she laughed.

"So do I," he confessed.

"We seem to agree, don't we?"

"Yes, don't we? But isn't it rather tiresome? There must be something on which we differ? How about people, for instance? Do you like them human—or respectable?"

Mrs. West looked at him, took aim, hesitated, and then, in place of whatever shaft she had in mind to shoot, remarked casually, "What fun it must be to laugh at people without their knowing it."

"It is diverting, I confess."

"The admiral says you ought to be muzzled."

"Yes, natives never do appreciate missionaries."

"You devil! And people actually pay you for poking fun at them!"

"Why not? I tell the truth so delightfully, you see."

"Is that why Kathy likes you to tell her everything? You do tell her everything, do you not?"

"Oh, I see—I *see*!" murmured Croft, after studying her face a moment or two. "I've been wondering what was back of all this fol-de-rol. So it's Kathy, eh?"

"Well—yes. You do tell her pretty much everything?"

"If she asks me anything, I tell her—everything."

"I thought so; and don't you regret having told her some things?"

"What, for example?"

"Can I be perfectly frank, Mr. Croft?"

"I'm afraid not, Mrs. West, but be as frank as you can."

So palpable a hit called for reprisals in kind, but, at the risk of being thought wanting in courage or resources, Mrs. West flung strategy to the winds and rushed her objective by saying, "She's to be married."

"So it seems."

"What do you think about it?"

"Well," laughed Croft, instantly altering his plan of campaign to meet her change of front, "Kathy knows what I think about marriage in general."

"Yes, she knows now, but did she know all this three years ago, when she promised to marry Mr. Lee? That's the point."

"Aren't you taking a rather round-about way to get to your point?"

"Thanks!" cried Mrs. West, stung by his manner into betraying irony; "I'll get to it just the same. Do you know Mr. Lee?"

"No. Do you?"

"Yes—intimately."

"Well?"

All her bridges blazing behind her, she sprang to her feet, grasped Croft's

sleeve, looked straight into his eye, and muttered, "You must put a stop to this marriage."

"I?" gasped Croft, magnanimously feigning amazement. "Oh, see here, you know!"

"You're no fool," she went on bitterly, "and neither am I. You know perfectly well that Kathy's not the same girl she was before she met you. You found her hungry—all girls are hungry to-day—and you fed her."

"Well," asked Croft, smiling by way of comedy relief to the tragic absurdity of the situation, "doesn't the diet agree with her?"

"Perfectly, *perfectly*! — that's the trouble. But what will the poor girl do if she marries Lee and can't have you? She'll starve."

"Lee is not indigestible, is he?"

"Yes—since you've given Kathy a taste of ideas."

"Great Scott! Hasn't Lee ideas?"

"Why, yes, of course he has ideas—but not new ones."

"That's so," mused Croft, "he's an officer and a gentleman. Well, Mrs. West, I'm afraid that most women with new ideas will have to put up with husbands with prehistoric ideas or no ideas at all."

"And what's the result? Wives have to choose between starving at home or picking up crumbs of comfort outside. I guess I know!"

An ominous little catch in her voice and the still more disconcerting sincerity in her expression made such a draft upon Croft's chivalry that he had perforce to forego the delights of fence for the moment. He waited until she returned from her little excursion in search of calmness and then said quietly, "Tell me about Lee."

"He's the dearest boy in the world," she replied, naively enough, "so tender and kind and brave! Yes, and he'll be famous some day, for he's working on a torpedo or something that will sink the biggest dreadnaught in five minutes."

"The dear, kind, tender fellow!"

"Shame on you!" cried Mrs. West,

actually blushing—with anger or some other emotion, Croft could not at the moment say. "This is no laughing matter, Mr. Croft. I'm in dead earnest, I tell you, and I'm no child, but a woman—a woman who knows life, believe me, for I've paid the price. So you must listen to me and stop this marriage. Don't try to fool me. You know that Kathy is yours. Her mind and soul are yours, and all that she could give another would be her body. That's God's truth and you know it."

Croft whistled softly and then said apologetically, "I take back what I said just now about you not being frank."

"Then trust me altogether and stop this marriage. Don't let such a mockery take place, don't, don't!"

"Yes, but how could I stop it, I'd like to know, even if I—" He was cut short by the raucous honking of a klaxon down on the highroad and he ran to the parapet and looked down over it.

"Horrors!" exclaimed Mrs. West. "Not visitors, I hope?"

"Can't see who it is yet," answered Croft, leaning far over the edge of rock, "but the car is stopping here."

"Who on earth can it be?" groaned Mrs. West, fishing out the vanity kit and furiously powdering out all possible traces of recent emotion and seeking reassurance from the tiny mirror. "And me up here alone—with you!"

Croft's loud laugh still further reassured her—for a moment only, for presently he turned and announced guiltily, "It's Kathy herself."

Away went the last vestige of pretense. No time, this, for indirection; it was now or never, and Mrs. West knew it. Clutching Croft's reluctant elbow, she fairly hissed her words at him. "Look at me, Quentin Croft! I want this marriage stopped. Hear me? I want it stopped, and if you do nothing to stop it—well, you'll be sorry, that's all!"

"Ugh!" muttered Croft, squirming. "Melodrama."

"I warn you. You don't know me."

"But I do know Kathy—and myself."

"Then you know that one word from you would stop it."

"I doubt it, but never mind that—it won't be spoken."

"For God's sake!"

"Hush! Here she is."

Mrs. West's look showed that she was far from being out of ammunition, but as the merry laugh was nearing the top of the trail she moved discreetly away from Croft, stage-whispering, "You whopping fool!" by way of a parting shot.

V

THE next moment Kathy, flushed and radiant, bounded into view. One and twenty in the tale of time, she looked even younger in her simple gown of summery white stuff, with a bunch of wild-flowers at her waist and a long motoring veil trailing from her bare brown arm. Tall, supple as a greyhound, regal as innocence, the girl might, at first glance, pass as merely one of that innumerable sisterhood of Gibsonesque athletes to be found on all American tennis courts and golf links; healthy, happy, self-reliant, altogether satisfying on the physical plane, but somewhat disappointing on other and higher planes. A second look, however, and more searching analysis revealed intimations of possibly upsetting complexity lying beneath the ingenuous surface, a sort of nucleus of embarrassing wisdom hatching within and dimly visible through the transparent shell of virginal inexperience. Also, about the poise of her head and the unafraid challenge of her big eyes was there warning given that "Tell-Me" Trench meant to find out. Decorous persons, even on first meeting her, felt instinctively that she might prove breath-takingly frank. Usually, too, her first remark proved the inerrancy of their instinct. A sign portentous of radical readjustments in sundry social relations, Kathy.

"Hello, Puck," she sang out, giving him her left hand as she passed him. "Well, Mrs. West, so this is where you and the Skipper sneaked off to so clan-

destinely! Where is the Skipper now?"

"He's gone somewhere to telephone to you."

"To me! What's up?" asked Kathy, turning from Mrs. West's guarded expression to Croft's eagerly communicative one.

"The admiral seems to think that Puck's Perch is hardly the place for you to—to—to enlist in the navy, you know."

"Oh, that's it, is it?" laughed Kathy. "Well, he might just as well understand right now, that if I'm to be married in two weeks it's to be up here, or it's mutiny; yes, and the Skipper knows that when I mutiny—well, I *mutiny*. But now tell me, Puck: what do you think of the news?"

Mrs. West, unseen by Kathy, signalled dire things to Croft.

"I think that I think what you think," he answered, seraphically ignoring the radiogram.

Behind the screen afforded by the ensuing laugh Mrs. West emerged from mystery, turned so that Kathy could see her perfectly untroubled face, and said merrily, "And I think that under the circumstances three is a crowd—and I positively refuse to be the crowd."

"I *would* like to talk to Puck alone if you don't mind—just for a few minutes," pleaded Kathy, an angel of ingenuousness. "Suppose you go into the studio and look at his new picture, 'Time and Tide Waiting for Woman.' It's unique, really."

"It must be," agreed Mrs. West, smiling the smile of the all-knowing and following Croft, who had already started thither, to the studio door.

"If I need your help, Mrs. West, and sing out," said Croft at the door, "will you hurry back?"

"Never fear! I mean to see this thing through. *Au 'voir!*"

Having seen Mrs. West into the studio, Croft shut the door and turned and crossed to Kathy. She was standing behind the big rustic chair and motioning him to come and sit in it, always the ritual observed at those "confes-

sions" which had come to mean so much to her. As the father confessor seated himself he felt that an operation on the heart, which he had witnessed in Vienna, was mere child's play compared with the nice little bit of vivisection he was now called upon to perform. All the more reason, therefore, to prevent nervousness in his patient by betraying none himself; so he waited a calm moment and then said quite in his old, casual way, "Well, pal, what's the good word?"

"Must I?" came beseechingly from behind his chair. "You know what I mean. Must I? Tell me."

"It depends."

"On what?"

"On you."

"Yes—of course—I know—my will alone must decide—but just now I can't strip my will naked, somehow, to see if it is my will and nothing but my will. Help me."

"Right-o! Let's have a peep at the situation through our old friend the Claude Lorraine glass, eh?"

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed Kathy, patting his bald spot and perching herself on the arm of the chair.

"You understand what the glass does to a landscape?"

"Certainly—it brings out everything that really counts."

"Quite so—and rubs out everything that doesn't count. Claude is an unmerciful surgeon. Are you sure you want everything cut out that doesn't count? It may hurt like fury."

"No matter," cried Kathy, grimly contemptuous of anaesthetics. "Up with the Claude Lorraine!"

Croft smiled approvingly, took from his pocket the glass and from his sleeve a silk handkerchief, polished scrupulously the opaque convex surfaces of the former, and then had recourse to that securest refuge of the true artist—a pause. Refreshed and enlightened therein he looked up at his impatient patient and said, "By the way, pal, please don't forget that I've never had even a distant glimpse of this particular heartscape."

"Who but you would think of calling it a heartscape?" joyously replied Kathy. "No, I've never told you I was engaged. I'm sorry now, for we might long ago have got the true values determined, no?"

"And the false values eliminated."

"Exactly! I wish to goodness I had told you, Puck."

"But as you did not tell me—"

"I had reasons," broke in Kathy.

"Indeed?"

"Yes."

"For instance?"

"Well, one reason was that I wanted to talk freely to you—see?"

"I see."

"Another reason was that half the time I wasn't quite sure whether I was engaged or not."

"Dear me!" chuckled Croft. "A sort of alternating current, was it, high voltage but intermittent?"

"Don't laugh."

"Forgive me. Go on. Any more reasons?"

She sat thinking for some little time, evidently trying to patch up seemingly apparel for the naked truth, but rejecting one garment after another as either too long or too short for the purpose. It was only when Croft held the glass up before her eyes that she discarded all sartorial suggestions and decided to risk speech in the "altogether." "Yes, Puck," she plunged in bravely, "the real reason why I've never told you is that when I'm with you you make me think so much and so fast about other things that I haven't time to think about Randolph at all."

Croft closed his strong hand over the trembling little fingers that sought it and then said, laughing quietly, "It's about time to think of Randolph now, isn't it?"

"It surely is—but do you realize what you are to me?"

"You're out of order," exclaimed Croft, thumping the arm of the chair. "The question before the house is not what I am to you, but what Randolph might, could, would, or should be to you."

The laugh was mutual and prolonged.

"As long as I can remember anything," Kathy volunteered at last, "I have been sure that two things would happen—that I'd get married some day and that I'd marry in the navy."

"Yes," philosophized Croft, "Mother Nature saw to the first and Father Admiral to the second."

"Exactly."

"Exactly."

"But I didn't know then what I know now," went on Kathy, splashing joyously in the sea of confession, the shock of the first plunge forgotten.

"No? What knowledge has come to you with the years?"

"Why, I loved dolls when I was five, loved boys when I was ten, and loved love when I was fifteen. Understand?"

"Perfectly."

"Thank you."

"Don't thank me," cried Croft, rising and walking about, always preferring the peripatetic method when certain subjects were to be discussed. "Don't thank me; thank your lucky stars you were born when you were and not when your mother was. She never knew all this."

"The Skipper would rather see me dead than married out of the navy; so when Ran asked me to marry him I was the happiest girl in the world."

"Nature and the admiral were on the job all right. But go on."

She remained silent long enough to arrange in proper sequence the things she had for some time wished that he knew and which, in the suddenly precipitated crisis of this day, he must be told. By the time that Croft passed her the third time she was ready and stopped him by saying, "I've always known Ran, and everybody took it for granted that as soon as I was old enough to fall in love I'd fall in love with him."

"And lo and behold, you did. How strange!"

Kathy knew him too well to scent irony in this; on the contrary, it was precisely this old air of intimate banter and quizzing philosophy that she had

prayed he would adopt at this fateful interview. So she let him pass without a reply. On his return she reached out and took his hand and said, "Puck."

"Yes?"

"Puck, I'm not as sure as I ought to be."

"About what?"

"Oh, about anything! Can't you understand? Please try."

"But what's the riddle?" he asked, disengaging his hand but not resuming his walk. "You've been engaged for years—the merry wedding bells are ringing out at last—you'll live happily ever after—same old sweet story!"

"It's not!" she retorted defiantly, springing to her feet and clutching both his hands. "It's not—and they shan't stampede me into it!"

"Steady, pal, steady!" urged Croft gently. "You'll have a rush of emotion to the head just when we want nothing there but good clear gray matter. Sit down—that's it—and talk things over quietly. Now then, just what's the trouble?"

Once more she remained silent, reconnoitering among several paths to find the short cut to the heart of the matter. Convinced that she had hit upon it, she looked up at him and asked, "May I talk to you, Puck, not as though I were a woman and you a man, but like two sensible human beings?"

"As people will talk day after tomorrow? Sure! Fire away!"

"Well, then, when Ran burst in upon me to-day it all rushed back upon me—the wild desire to give myself to him—just as it did three years ago, when he first took me in his arms. Understand?"

"Quite—Mother Nature never sleeps."

"Oh, the rapture of it!" she went on quickly, pressing her hands to her cheeks and looking at the ground. "But the moment Ran left me and I had time to think, a shadow seemed to fall across my joy—the shadow of the knowledge that has come to me. Can knowledge cast a shadow?"

"Knowledge is light: light is the only

thing that can cast shadows; and shadows show there's something in light's way."

If the wise be ever rewarded Croft was paid in full by the refulgence of gratitude in the face she turned up to him. To the expression of adoration succeeded one less exalted but rather more comfortable, and it was with a smile that she asked, "Why don't men always talk to women as you talk to me?"

"Jerusalem!" ejaculated Croft, welcoming her smile with a laugh. "We wouldn't dare to. Men can talk freely to each other, but not to women. No respectable woman is supposed to be fit to hear the truth."

"I know it. Ever since Aunt Kate came I've had to hide my books."

Croft chuckled inwardly. Himself had selected Kathy's books and he had met Aunt Kate. Presently, having resumed his former sympathetic air, he said, "But this shadow you speak of—what is it?"

"Doubt—doubt as to what my feeling for Randolph really is."

"I thought you said just now that your feelings had not changed?"

"That's not the point," she protested, rising again; "my feelings haven't changed but my ideas have. If my feeling for Ran is only the blind instinct of sex for sex it's not love and I shan't let it cheat me."

"You have been reading, haven't you?"

"And thinking."

"And sprouting wings?"

"Yes," she cried, stretching out her arms as if to fly, "wings, wings so that nobody can catch me and put me in a cage."

"Aren't you afraid of cats?"

"I'll fly too high."

"Good!—but you must alight sometimes. Mind the cats!"

"Oh, I'm not afraid of anything—except myself. If Ran doesn't see things as I do after I've told him, I won't marry him. I don't want a husband: I want a mate, a comrade. Puck, help me to see Ran as he really is."

"You know him: I do not—remember that."

"We've got two weeks to study him and think it over. Won't you—you know what I mean—won't you draw him out and discover just what he is? Please do."

"Holy smoke!" laughed Croft, not even the piteous appeal in her eyes sufficing to protect her from his joy. "Is that all you want me to do? I'll have to get some business cards printed—'Quentin Croft, Matrimony Expert. Fiancés examined and analyzed while you wait. Confidential reports sent in plain sealed envelopes. No publicity. Write for terms.'"

"Aren't you horrid!" pouted Kathy. "But, seriously, Puck, I do wish you would try—" She did not finish the sentence, for the door of the studio was thrown open and Mrs. West came out.

VI

AFTER taking in the situation from the threshold and receiving an unmistakable invitation from Croft, Mrs. West crossed the little terrace and said as she came up to them, "If you two people haven't a clearer idea of whatever it is you've been talking about than I have of those pictures in there I pity you."

"Yes," answered Kathy, "aren't Mr. Croft's pictures different?"

"I should say so!—if I had the remotest idea what they are pictures of."

"They are pictures of the remotest ideas, Mrs. West," explained Croft.

"Indeed? And you are teaching Kathy? Is she an apt pupil?"

"Nothing to brag about," Croft replied soberly, "but the significant thing is that any woman should take the remotest interest in remote ideas."

Followed—for the two women, not for Croft—a hiatus of silence filled with mixed thoughts and due to mixed causes. It was broken by Kathy, who asked sweetly, "Did you notice the lovely little canvas called 'Innocence,' Mrs. West?"

"I did. Shocking! How dared you, Mr. Croft?"

"Don't scold me," pleaded Croft. "I only painted nature. Scold her! Fancy how Anthony Comstock will scold her on the day of judgment!"

"But you ought to have remembered that nature also provided fig-leaves."

"Ah, but fig-leaves didn't come into fashion until the Devil had got the best of Eve, and Adam proved a liar and a coward."

"Better not get him started, Mrs. West," warned Kathy. "He's dangerous. Ask Aunt Kate."

A certain well-known gleam in Croft's eyes caused Kathy anxiety, but almost at once it was relieved by a loud halloo from somewhere down the trail and she ran eagerly to the edge of the cliff, saying, "Why, that's Ran's voice, I'm sure." Nor was she deceived, for she cried out after peering over the edge, "Sure enough, it is." To a second call from below she sang out, "Yes, Ran, this is the place. Come up! Come up!" Then, having seen him begin the ascent, she turned to the others and said, "I'm so glad, Mrs. West, that you're here, for Ran says he's never met you and he'll make you promise to be at the wedding—that is, of course, if there is a wedding."

"Thanks, my dear," replied Mrs. West, "but I never attend weddings except my own. Weddings sadden me."

"Mrs. West!" protested Kathy, Ran's unexpected arrival putting her in no mood for jests, more particularly anent weddings.

"But I never miss going to a funeral," rattled on Mrs. West, "because there's no pretense at a funeral."

"No," remarked Croft, oblivious to Kathy's distress, "a corpse means precisely what it says."

"Yes," came back Mrs. West, "and there's never any question but it will stay dead happily ever after."

"You two are perfectly horrid," cried Kathy, barely able to hide the fact that her words conveyed her true feelings. "But here is Ran."

Even in mufti—just now the smart-

est of civilian street dress—Lieutenant Randolph Lee, U.S.N., looked an officer and a gentleman, as, hat in hand, he hurried forward to greet Kathy. Nor need one wait to hear him speak to know that in the proudest strains of their First Families he had lived a Virginian. Also, the Chesterfieldian manners and italicized punctilio betokened much, as, for example, that the thought uppermost in his mind and the word most frequently on his lips was Honor; *item*, that Don Quixote boasted no loftier ideals of chivalry than he; and, *item*, that while doubtless willing to admit that other things might improve through change, no alteration was thinkable in the good old relations between man and woman or between woman and society. Handsome, too, this dashing young officer and gentleman, and as polished in the drawing-room as he was patriotic on the gun deck; a type persisting in the backwater of "the service," whirl the rest of the world never so giddily in the maelstrom of evolution.

"Well, Kathy, here you are!" exclaimed Mr. Lee. "I thought I never would find the place."

"So glad you came, Ran!" replied Kathy. "Let me present you. Mrs. West: Mr. Lee."

Mr. Lee's perfect acknowledgment of the honor was equaled only by Mrs. West's properly bored indifference to it. And the incident was closed.

"And, Ran, dear," Kathy hurried on, "this is my precious old Puck, Mr. Quentin Croft."

This time the honor was shared equally and acknowledged cordially by both parties thereto, Mr. Lee remarking as he grasped Mr. Croft's hand, "Miss Trench has told me so much about you, sir, that I feel like I knew you right well already."

"And I hope to know you better very soon," replied Croft, mastering with considerable difficulty an impulse to wink at Kathy.

"Thank you, sir," said Mr. Lee, finally relinquishing Croft's hand and turning to Kathy. "Where is the ad-

miral, Miss Kathy? I must see him at once."

"Daddy will be back directly—but what's the matter, Ran? You look worried."

"I *am* worried—orders from Washington—my ship must sail to-morrow," replied Lee gloomily.

The effect upon his three listeners was profound; also, it was highly diversified. Croft, giving, of course, no outward and visible sign, nevertheless felt the anticipatory thrill of him who sees the curtain go up for the plot-unraveling scene. Mrs. West, almost as masterful over exhibitions that betray, gave a start of unmixed satisfaction but checked it at once and brought into play an expression of sympathetic concern. Kathy alone suffered and said so.

"To-morrow!" she gasped, dropping upon the chair; "but, good heavens, Ran, you won't have to go, will you?"

"I'm afraid I must," answered Lee. "I've wired the Senator to see the right people, but pshaw! what's the use? I have no pull."

"But," argued Kathy, "you told me that one officer was to be detached from the ship. Why can't you be the one?"

"Appleton gets the plum," replied Lee bitterly. "You see, his wife is the niece of someone high up in the administration."

Kathy groaned aloud and Croft, ever with an eye to comedy relief, ventured the pleasantry, "Does the fate of heroes depend upon pull and—and—petticoats?"

"Don't, Puck, *please*!" pleaded Kathy.

"Forgive me, Kathy. Where is your ship going, Mr. Lee?"

"Nobody knows," glumly answered Lee.

"What!"

"Sealed orders," still more glumly announced Lee.

Kathy got to her feet and trained her battery of rapid-fire criticism on the time-honored methods of the sacred service. "Sealed orders!" she blazed forth; "that means that you don't know where you're going nor how long you'll

be gone nor what you'll do when you get there! Absurd!"

"How human!" mused Croft, addressing the distant hills. "Starting out without the vaguest notion as to where you are going nor why! How like modern civilization, or—or—how like marriage!"

"Can't break the seal till we're out at sea," elucidated Lee.

"Delightful!" ejaculated Croft. "Can't know what to do until you are quite at sea! But tell me, Mr. Lee: why do they trust an officer not to break a seal but not to keep his mouth shut?"

"It does seem silly," Lee confessed, "when you put it that way."

"But they've always done it that way in the navy," remarked Mrs. West.

"Then, of course, it's not silly," Croft added, "but the acme of wisdom."

During this interchange of sacrilege Kathy had sought light and relief by going to the top of the trail and gazing down at the high road. A fruitless quest, apparently, for presently she returned to the others, visibly perturbed, not to say harrowed, and said ominously, "This is simply frightful. I do wish Daddy would hurry back."

"You mean—?" asked Lee with infinite solicitude.

"I mean," replied Kathy decisively, "that this, of course, changes everything."

"Must it?" implored Lee. "Don't you think the admiral might consent to our being married tonight?"

"He might consent," retorted Kathy from the towering heights scaled only by injured innocence, "but I, Ran, I—you don't realize what this means to me. I want two weeks to think in, not two hours."

"Yes, of course, Kathy," answered Lee soothingly, "but under the circumstances—"

This was too much. With quivering lip and flashing eye she opened on his obtuseness the broadside of her chagrin and perplexity. "The circumstances!" she cried; "what have the circumstances got to do with it? What would they amount to after we're married and it's

too late to do anything but regret? No, you shan't, you simply shan't force me to decide without giving me time to think. Oh, can't you see that this is—that I—that—" Injured, innocent and young, she had ready no prudently devised canals or channels to carry off the torrent of distress which now overwhelmed her, so nature took its course. With only one piteously apologetic look at Croft and a defiant one at Lee, her words were drowned in a flood of tears and Kathy fled, laughing and crying hysterically, into the studio.

Tableau!

"I think I understand the symptoms, Mr. Lee," said Croft, to end the general discomfort. "May I go in and prescribe for her?"

"Yes, sir," Lee replied, bowing solemnly. "I wish you would, sir."

Thinking sundry thoughts that showed not in his face, Croft crossed to the studio, went in and shut the door behind him.

VII

MRS. WEST's contribution to the general relief fund, after Kathy's explosion, took the form of an immediate flight from the two men to the farthest corner of the terrace. There she was, standing and viewing the majestic panorama of land and sea, when Croft, as his own contribution, went into the house. And thither hastened Lee to her the instant the door was shut.

"Well, Stella," he asked as he came up to her, "what in the name of God does this mean?"

"Don't come too near me," replied Mrs. West, without turning and still intent upon the view. "Since you thought it best to lie to her and tell her you'd never met me, you'd better not give yourself away."

"All right," agreed Lee, veering his course so that it brought him not too close to her side, "but why have you turned up here?"

"Oh, see here, Ran, please don't look as though it was blackmail. It's not money I want."

"What, then?"

"I want you to give her up—and marry me."

"Stella!"

"Hush! Not so loud. And don't stand here; walk about."

Lee obeyed, waiting until his return from the other end of the terrace to say, "I can't call it off now; you know I can't."

"Very well," Stella answered bitterly, "but listen. No, keep walking but listen. She doesn't love you, Ran. A blind man can see that. I do love you, and if it wasn't for your pride—your honor, as you'd call it—and that the admiral would storm, and you'd lose caste among your fellow-officers for jilting her, you'd jilt her in a minute and marry me. You know you would."

"You mean elope with you, a married woman—disgrace myself—drag you down with me—lose everything, my name, my standing, my commission—that's what you mean."

"Stop, Ran," she protested, speaking feverishly but not turning her head nor looking at him, "I'm not that kind. I've been divorced, I tell you, and I'll be free to marry you next winter."

"Divorced!" groaned Lee, stopping and advancing toward her. "Not on account of me?"

"Of course! Who else?" she retorted, motioning him to proceed on his walk. "West may be old but he's not blind, exactly. He saw all that went on, last summer in Japan, and hurried back from Tokyo and filed his suit."

"Naming me co-respondent? Why haven't you ever told me?"

Mrs. West's laugh had stood her in good stead in many a tight pinch. She resorted to it now and under its reliable safe-conduct she ventured to turn from the view and face Lee as he approached her directly before the studio windows. "No, no," she laughed, "he wanted to name you, but I prevented it by promising that I would not contest his suit. I'm white, Ran, *white*."

So merry was her laugh that Kathy, catching sight of them just at that moment, wiped her own eyes and took

a more cheerful view of things in general and her peculiar situation in particular, while Croft thanked God and took courage.

"I know you're white," said Lee when the laugh permitted, "whiter than many who criticise you, Stella. And you say you actually allowed West to accuse you without replying, just to save me? My God! girl, I almost wish you hadn't, for I can never hope to repay you, never!"

"Yes, you can, Ran—a millionfold. Just give her up—nothing but foolish pride prevents you—give her up, Ran, and marry me."

"I'm not a free man, Stella; I'm an officer. Think of the scandal it would bring upon the service. I can't, I can't."

"Very well, then," she sneered, turning her back to the menace of the windows and going once more to enjoy the view, "I'll carry out my plan."

"And do what, Stella?" asked Lee, close at her heels and plainly on dead reckonings.

"Marry the admiral—to be near you!"

"Stella!"

Destiny, the one truly great dramatist, rang down the curtain just in time to prevent the ruin of the situation and the threatened development of an anticlimax. The door of the studio was flung open before the scene could taper off into fatuity, and Croft came rushing out.

"Hard-a-port, sir!" he sang out to Lee. "I've just sighted the admiral tacking like mad up the trail—decks cleared for action—guns trained on the enemy—and steaming under forced draught."

"He must have heard the cheering news," gurgled Mrs. West joyously.

"Lend a hand, will you, Mr. Croft," asked Lee, "to clear away his objections?"

"Aye, aye, sir!"

Gasps and grunts and muttering not loud but deep heralded the coming of the flagship and indicated that she was making heavy weather of it. Croft and Mrs. West smiled unblushingly, but Mr.

Lee, as in duty bound, stiffened perceptibly and took his proper station to receive the admiral when he came over the side. This he did presently—in active eruption.

"Well, Lee," shouted the admiral, returning Mr. Lee's salute, "here's a fine how-d'ye-do. B-r-r-r-r!"

"You've heard, sir?" inquired Lee. "The ship leaves port to-morrow—sealed orders, sir."

"I take it you'll have to go with your ship?"

"I fear so, sir. Mr. Appleton has got the detail I wanted. His wife's uncle is a member of the Cabinet, I believe, sir."

"That's it," fumed the admiral, "that's just it—pull, sir, pull and pp-p-petticoats! But I'll show 'em. There'll be a wedding at eight bells this evening, sir, in spite of all the petticoats and politicians this side of hell, sir."

Once more a simple announcement produced a profound effect upon all who heard it; once more, too, that effect was diversified and due to diverse causes. Also, it set into instantaneous motion three wholly distinct and widely opposed streams of emotion and intention. Smiling serenely Mrs. West and Croft heard the announcement and took due note thereof, but gave no sign nor evidence of what they made of it, still less of what they meant to make of it later. Lee alone rejoiced and said so. Grasping the admiral's hand and choking with feeling he wrung it heartily and murmured "Thank you, sir, thank you."

"Be all right, won't it, Croft," asked the admiral after pooh-poohing at Lee, "to ask them up here this evening—just a few officers from Lee's ship, you know, and possibly one or two from the fort, not a dozen all told?"

"Certainly, Admiral," Croft answered cheerily. "I suppose these heroes will expect something to eat?"

"And to drink," added the admiral assuredly, "but don't you bother about it. I'll have everything sent over from the hotel. Come, Mrs. West, we must hurry back and find Kathy, for there's

not a moment to lose. Eight bells this evening, Croft."

For one nerve-tormenting instant Croft feared that Lee would spoil everything by revealing Kathy's presence in the studio, but he had reckoned without his Stella. Quick as a flash that wisest of women had engaged Lee's eye and warned him, on pain of untold suffering, to hold his tongue. An officer and a gentleman, Lee accepted her sealed orders and governed himself accordingly, though not a little troubled thereby. The sooner to reward his unquestioning obedience, Mrs. West smiled at Lee and then turned to the admiral and said, "I do hope Kathy will consent to this sudden change of plan, Admiral, but you never can tell, you know."

"She'll do as her father tells her," sputtered the admiral, "or I'm not her father. Lee, I noticed that your taxi is waiting below, so Mrs. West and I will hurry along now in my car. My arm, madam. So long, Croft. Do something for you some day, old man."

With Mrs. West on his gallant arm Admiral Trench went over the side in splendid form, leaving Croft and Lee to face the facts in the rapidly developing crisis. Croft, doing his thinking in terms of naval strategy, secretly feared that Kathy might prove as surprisingly resurgent and as difficult to locate as a submarine. Lee, whose psychological studies were pursued at the social Annapolis of the chivalrous Past, relied implicitly upon "plighted troth" and "filial duty" to bring the fair little craft alongside at the first signal from the flagship.

"It's barely possible," quietly suggested Croft, "that Kathy might like to know that she's to be married this evening. Shall I go in and ask her to come out?"

"Yes, please do, sir," Lee replied, blissfully impervious to humor, "and if you don't mind, sir, I'd like to see her alone."

"Yes, that had occurred to me before you mentioned it," laughed Croft, hurrying into the studio, while Lee betook

himself to the edge of the cliff and the view.

Some minutes passed before Kathy appeared at the door, where she stood watching Lee's straight back for another minute before calling out to him.

"Ran."

Lee whirled about and ran forward eagerly, saying as he came to her, "You've heard? Think before you decide, Kathy."

"Think!" retorted Kathy, declining the invitation of his outstretched arms. "What time have I to think?"

"We've loved each other for three years: isn't that long enough?"

"I've grown in these three years. Have you grown, Ran?"

"My love for you has grown."

"You think it has, but, Ran, we're strangers, you and I, absolute strangers."

"Kathy! I felt your heart beat against mine this morning."

"Oh, yes," she replied, troubling him vaguely by what struck him as an unmaidenly boldness in her expression, "I'm a woman and you're a man, but that doesn't mean that you're *the* man, the one man that I want."

A knockout, this, on the solar plexus of his most sacred ideals of womanliness, but he managed to stammer out that he was more than willing to trust his feelings.

"But I'm not willing," Kathy came back at him. "All that I ask is time to get acquainted with your mind, for my own mind has changed during our separation. I'm not the least bit like the girl you fell in love with three years ago."

"You do not doubt me, Kathy? That isn't what you mean?"

"No, no," she rejoiced him by exclaiming, "believe me, Ran, I don't. I think you true and noble, but—but—Oh, can't you see? I would have married you this morning—yes, while you held me in your arms I would have given you myself, body and mind and soul—but I've had time to think and now I will not do it until I'm sure. Ten thousand weddings could not make us one, and, surely, Ran, you wouldn't ask

me to live with you, doubting as I doubt now. So please don't tempt me as you did to-day. I simply ask for time; I must be sure."

As if the very nature of her appeal had unleashed the primeval man within the officer and gentleman, he kissed her lips, her eyes, her neck, and then again and again her lips.

"Stop!" she cried as she struggled. "Stop, Ran, or I'll hate you." Suddenly circumspect, Lee released her and she cowered away from him, her cheeks aflame. Quick to note these signs of surrender, Lee waited for her to become calmer and then smiled and held out his arms to her. Again her cheeks flamed.

"Please!" she moaned, pushing him away.

"All right," he said after repeated repulses, "I'll go away to-morrow—*forever!*" He gave to "forever" precisely the note of hopeless doom proper to orthodox Romance.

"No," Kathy repeated, "not forever, Ran—only till I've had time to think."

With superb dignity and the air of a knight-errant departing on the quest imposed by his cruel fair, Lee lifted his hat, bowed sadly and began to move toward the trail. Half way there, however, he stopped and came back to where Kathy stood watching him with misty eyes.

"Kiss me," he begged reverentially. She suffered him.

"Good-bye!" he murmured, when at last he found strength to forego another rapturous embrace.

"Good-bye!" scarcely whispered Kathy, like a Galatea operating on the reverse lever and thus mutating backward from passion to petrification.

This time Sir Randolph turned not back from his emprise, but reached the head of the trail and disappeared down the steep slope, leaving the Lady Galatea rigid and cold, a monument to Mind over Matter.

Quietly opening the studio door Croft took an observation of the weather and was on the point of laying a wreath of commendation at the feet of the statue, when Woman once more proved

the Riddle of the Universe. Crying, "Ran, Ran, wait, wait!" Kathy fell from the pedestal of Reason and rushed yearningly down the ancient trail of Instinct.

"Sealed orders," commented Croft, gazing after her.

VIII

ABOUT half after ten o'clock that evening the silence and security of the far-famed *patio* of the Hotel del Coronado suffered an invasion as unwonted as upsetting. Suddenly, through the French windows of the "Cecil Brunner" bridal suite, at the far corner of the court, burst a hilarious band of roysterers, resplendent in martial gold lace, who thereupon opened a rice bombardment of the happy couple and their remaining friends standing on the balcony. Romance, surprised, and philosophy, disturbed, reacted each in its own way to the rude shock. Out from dense tropical shadows visions of filmy ball gowns flitted to safety across incriminating splashes of open moonlight; rotund old gentlemen, surreptitiously puffing their ancient briar-root pipes, elsewhere *taboo*, grunted protestingly; and dowagers, rocking in ambush on loggias overlooking the *patio*, betrayed a proper interest in holy matrimony by ringing up the office to find out who "she" was.

It was all over, however, in a few minutes. Their ammunition running low, the sons of Mars ceased firing. Followed much waving of handkerchiefs and wishing of godspeed and happiness, and away hurried the battalion, somewhat unsteady in gait, their gorgeous epaulettes and burnished accoutrements glistening in the moonlight. The bridal party likewise withdrew within their doors, silence and security settled over the paradise of palms and pomegranates, and once more the lure of the tropics beckoned romance and philosophy from the glare of the ballroom and the garrulity of the lobby and verandas.

"Well, good people," said Mrs. West, stepping into the exquisite little draw-

ing-room through the curtains the admiral held back for her, "I must be saying good-night."

"Not till we've drunk the bride's health," protested Admiral Trench, following her through the window and signaling the fleet to rendezvous forthwith in the adjoining dining-room. "Come—everybody."

"But, Skipper, darling," laughed the bride—even a bride with disconcerting sadness and perplexity in her eyes feels called upon to laugh, since she dare not cry—"you've been drinking my health steadily for over an hour."

"Rubbish!" retorted the admiral, veering his course so as to bear down upon the little old lady sitting patiently in her corner. "Who's in command here? I guess I can crack an extra bottle when my own little girl is launched. Come along, Kate."

Thus appealed to, Aunt Kate emerged from the reverie into which she had slipped, quite unnoticed, while the fun ran fast and furious; a reminiscent, dimmed, old-lavender sort, Aunt Kate, whose whole equipment of sentiments and principles had taken definite and final shape before the Centennial Exposition in 1876, since which epochal date the world had manifestly gone from bad to worse. "No, Thomas, thank you, no more for me," she replied, tapping the admiral's inviting hand reprovingly with her rare old fan; "and please don't forget that I must have a little talk with Kathy before I go."

"That's so; I was forgetting. Anyhow, Lee, come on; we two can manage one small bottle between us, eh, what?" Throwing a steadying arm about Lee's shoulder, he led that rather reluctant officer out of the room.

During the patently awkward silence in which the three women found themselves Mrs. West strolled casually to the window and gazed pensively out upon the moonlit court; Aunt Kate sat up straighter in her chair as if morally stiffening for the discharge of duty; and the bride, for want of something whereby to relieve the vague sense of strain, removed her long tulle veil and

perched herself on the arm of the dainty "Cecil Brunner" upholstered *tête-à-tête*. After a little she precipitated the relief the three of them longed for by saying, "So you want to talk to me, Aunt Kate?"

"Yes, dear—just a little talk about—about—marriage, you know."

Kathy, frankly unappreciative, dropped from the arm into the seat of the little sofa, while Mrs. West wheeled about from the window and cried: "Dear me! I'm in the way."

"Not at all," quietly replied Aunt Kate, "not at all, Mrs. West, for you've been married."

"There's no doubt about that," laughed Mrs. West, moving toward the hall door; "I'm always getting married, you know, but—but—" An urgent wireless appeal from the bride forced her to stop and seat herself, not permanently in a chair, but non-committally on the piano-stool.

"Why do you want to talk to me just now, Aunt Kate?" asked Kathy.

"Because—well, because you've never known a mother."

"But what an auntie I've had!" glowed Kathy diplomatically.

"That's very sweet of you," answered Aunt Kate, clearly touched, "but I've scarcely laid eyes on you since you've been old enough to talk to."

"About what?"

"Oh, certain things—"

The prudent choice of the piano-stool enabled Mrs. West to turn away discreetly without having to rise.

"Your father was always carrying you off with him to the four corners of the earth," went on Aunt Kate, "so you have grown up with no older woman to talk to."

"And as wild as a sea bird, eh?"

"You'll be tamed fast enough, my dear," announced Aunt Kate, flashing a "we know" glance at Mrs. West. "Just wait until you have a dozen babies!"

"A dozen!" gasped Kathy.

"But," groped Aunt Kate, "if heaven sends us children we must bear them."

"Yes, but how many children are

really post-marked 'Heaven'?" asked Mrs. West, while Kathy rushed reinforcements by remarking: "I've just finished reading a wonderful book—"

"You read entirely too much, Kathy," frowned Aunt Kate.

"Can anyone know too much, Aunt Kate?"

"Yes, a woman can; no woman should read anything without advice."

"I don't read anything without advice; Puck picks my books out for me."

Once again rotation saved Mrs. West.

"I do wish you wouldn't call him by that familiar name," replied Aunt Kate, "especially now that you're married. Mr. Croft may be a clever man, but he's a most upsetting person, and as for his views—*well!*"

"I wish mine were as broad and brave and beautiful, Aunt Kate."

"Kathy!—after the shocking things he says of marriage?"

"What, for instance?"

Always irritated by a demand for particulars when stating irrefutable generalizations, Aunt Kate bridled reprovingly and looked to Mrs. West for support. Nor was that ally caught unprepared. "For one thing, Kathy," she said, winking the faintest hint of a wink, "Mr. Croft told Mrs. Endicott that he thought the most shocking thing about marriage was that it makes two people vow to love each other forever—as if love were potatoes and could be delivered by the bushel, according to contract."

"Kathy! How can you laugh?" moaned Aunt Kate.

"Forgive me—please—Aunt Kate," chuckled Kathy, and then, as if thinking aloud, rambled on irreverently: "The party of the first part hereby agrees to love the party of the second part forever, no matter if she finds out he's a beast; and to deliver to the said party of the second part, on demand, so many caresses, so many kisses, so many babies, until death doth them part!"

Aunt Kate's cry of horror was lost amid the impenitent glee of the others.

"Auntie," said Kathy demurely

enough after a little, "just what is a husband, anyhow?"

The violence of the impulse sent the piano stool spinning around three times and, when she could stop it, Mrs. West faced the keyboard and safety.

"That's precisely what I want to talk to you about," murmured Aunt Kate confidentially, "and very frankly, too, Kathy."

"But, first of all, Aunt Kate, what is a man?"

"A-a-a man," stammered Aunt Kate, "why, a man is a—"

"A man is a big selfish, unreasonable animal," shot in Mrs. West, masking her fire behind a one-finger exercise in the key of C.

"An animal?" laughed Kathy.

"Yes—wild," came from the piano, the while the opening notes of "Home, Sweet Home" were picked out.

"Don't mind her nonsense, Kathy," argued Aunt Kate. "In some respects a man is a wild animal—but he can be tamed."

"Yes, but is he worth taming? And will he stay tamed?"

"If you humor him, listen to his advice, and rub him the right way a husband will be all that a wife could wish."

"And she—will she be all that she herself could wish?"

"She ought not to wish to be anything but a good wife and mother."

With the refrain of "Home, Sweet Home" came also from the piano the oracularly uttered words, "Yes, my dear, one should strive to be just a nice soft sofa-cushion."

"What a sublime career!" laughed the new-made bride.

"That's the game, Kathy," ejaculated Mrs. West: "Let hubby have his way; you never have your way; and then he'll be devoted to you!"

"How very nice!" murmured Kathy to the ceiling.

"Poor child!" commiserated Aunt Kate, adding with a significant side glance at Mrs. West: "Come, Kathy, sit here beside me and let me talk to you about—about—"

"No! Spare yourself, Aunt Kate, and me."

"You'd thank me afterwards."

The bride, blushing at last and openly resentful, rose and strolled to the window, whither she was followed by Mrs. West, who whispered something to her and passed out on to the balcony.

"You imagine," went on Aunt Kate, "that you know life. You don't."

"For heaven's sake, Aunt Kate, leave me alone!"

"Why, Kathy, what is this? You are not angry with me?"

Kathy ran and dropped on her knees before the flustered old lady, pouring forth her words lest they should blister her lips. "No, Auntie, I'm not angry—with you, I mean. I'm furious at myself for being ashamed; that's all. Just feel my cheeks. Isn't it shameful to be ashamed of life? If I could only tell you all that I feel! If you and all the rest were what Puck is—free—brave—and true! Somehow, when I'm with him I'm not afraid, but when I grope down here among you people I don't dare think, much less speak out, the truth."

She buried her flaming face in Aunt Kate's lap but before that perplexed yet persistent confessor could shape the proper admonition a loud laugh came from the dining-room and Kathy scrambled to her feet just in time to avoid being seen, for the door was flung open and the admiral and Lee, convulsed with merriment, came in. Through the French window from the balcony came also Mrs. West.

"Just been telling Lee a capital old yarn," sang out the admiral, navigating cautiously and speaking with an odd tendency to telescope his words. "Want to hear it?"

"Steady there, Skipper," warned Kathy; "some of your yarns need fumigating, you know."

"Some other time, please, Thomas. Do behave properly!" pleaded Aunt Kate, rising majestically to bring the party to an end.

"It's getting late, Admiral," contributed Mrs. West.

"Rubbish! — just-shank-th'evening," retorted the admiral, dropping heavily upon the seat just vacated by Aunt Kate.

Knowing him of old, Kathy signalled the others not to waste time in futile pleadings—the Skipper, she knew, would tell his yarn—but in the hope of sparing Aunt Kate unnecessary suffering, she threw her arm about her father's neck and whispered an entreaty for nicety of choice. When, finally, he heard her and understood, the admiral knit his shaggy eyebrows and glowered about the room, growling: "Rubbish! Yarn's perfectly proper—want chaplain to hear it. Where's chaplain, Kate?"

"He left ages ago. Do behave, Thomas!"

"Chaplain turned in, you say? A-right! Who cares? Pipe all hands, Mr. Lee, and here she goes! When I was a midshipman, aboard old Admiral Parker's flagship—"

"It's all right, Aunt Kate," broke in Kathy; "I know this yarn."

"Less noise down there on the spar-deck!" thundered the admiral. "As I was saying—where was I, anyhow?"

"Aboard the flagship," prompted Mrs. West.

"Admiral Parker's, sir," assisted Lee.

"Oh, yes," went on the admiral. "Well, Parker, let me tell you, was none of your mollycoddle modern commanders, but a peppery, hot-tempered old tyrant, sir, of the good old school."

"Poor seaman Johnson is waiting to be buried, Daddy," murmured Kathy when the admiral paused as if doubtful as to his bearings.

"Who's spinning this yarn?" snarled the admiral, withering with his glance the entire ship's company.

"Thomas, Thomas—if you could see yourself!"

"Doninnerup me, Kate; ish not polite. Well, yellow fever broke out aboard the flagship, and an able-bodied seaman by the name of—of—"

"Johnson?" ventured Mrs. West.

"I half believe you're right. Yes, come to think of it, his name was Johnson," nodded the admiral gratefully.

"Well, Johnson took the fever and died, so there was nothing to do but bury him at sea. Come, Kate, even you must admit the only thing to do was to bury him at sea."

"As soon as possible, please, Thomas."

"Eggzackly! — sooner the better. P-p-p-poor J-j-j-johnson!" Completely overcome by the fate of Johnson, the admiral wept.

As tenderly as he could, and just in time to save the situation, Lee laid a sympathetic hand on the admiral's bowed shoulder and said: "Did I understand you to say, sir, that Admiral Parker was in command?"

"Yes, sir," replied Admiral Trench, frowning but no longer mourning, "and heaven help the man who didn't know who was in command of old Parker's ship. Old Parker knew, and so did every man aboard, except the chaplain—pompous sort, you know, who had joined the ship only a week before poor—poor—what was his name again?"

"You don't mean Johnson, do you?" asked Mrs. West.

"Yes, yes—before poor Johnson died. Well, all hands were at attention abaft midships on the starboard side, waiting to see poor Johnson slipped over, when out walks Mr. Chaplain in full regalia and begins the burial service so almighty important, that old Parker suddenly thunders: 'Stop, sir! Stop, sir! I'll have you understand, sir, that nobody can be the resurrection and the life abroad this ship without my orders!'"

"Thomas!" Aunt Kate alone could speak; the rest joined in the roar with which the admiral received his own yarn; but the sudden recollection of seaman Johnson's untimely taking off checked the admiral's unseemly hilarity and plunged him once more into tearful meditation which ended in his turning with maudlin solemnity to address Lee.

"Mr. Lee."

"Yes, Admiral?"

"Come here, sir."

Sheepish but respectful, poor Lee avoided the eyes of the others and

obeyed orders, reaching the admiral's side just as he had taken Kathy by the hand preparatory to bestowing upon them the paternal benediction—for the sixth or seventh time at least since the wedding.

"Try to get him away, somehow," whispered Lee to Kathy as they stood with reverently bowed heads to receive the blessing.

"Aunt Kate is very tired, Daddy," hinted Kathy as soon as reverence permitted.

"Yes, Thomas, do let us go."

"Rubbish! Nobody goes ashore till I say so. Lee!"

"Yes, Admiral?"

"Unless my eyes deceive me, sir, you wear the uniform of an officer in the greatest and most glorious navy afloat, sir, afloat to-day or at any period in the world's history, sir!"

"I shall try to wear it with honor, Admiral Trench."

"It's so becoming," laughed Mrs. West, "that I'd never take it off if I were you, Mr. Lee."

Lee bowed solemnly and was about to say something more or less cryptic to the others, but clear to Mrs. West, when the admiral, the spirit of benediction strong upon him, rose to his feet, brushed Mrs. West aside, and joined the hands of the bride and groom before saying with profound feeling: "Kathy, you're the wife of 'n officer'n' gen'man."

"Yes, Daddy. Good night!"

But the hand stretched forth to bless was not so easily to be discouraged. Swaying from side to side until he achieved stable equilibrium with only a slight list to port, his voice choked with tears and his eyes suffused with tenderness, the father murmured: "Bless you, my children!" Ensued a moment of suppressed feelings of many sorts, when the admiral, his eye flashing now and his voice no longer choked with tears but with patriotic fervor, looked sternly at Lee and said: "Mr. Lee, on this memorable—I might even say this epoch-making occasion, I ask you to swear to me, that you will visit the fa-

therless and widows in their affliction—so that a government of the people, for the people, and by the people shall not perish from the facethearth!"

Amid the resultant tumult Mrs. West was heard to shout: "All ashore that's going ashore!" The admiral had dropped back into his chair but remained awake just long enough to say: "One moment—if you please. Friends, Romansh'n'countrymen, I come—to bury—Johnson." Then did nature's sweet restorer come to the rescue and Rear Admiral Trench, U. S. N., retired, slept the sleep of the just.

"Come, Auntie dear, and I'll help you on with your things," at once said Kathy, and led the much-distressed moralist away.

Directly the door was shut, Mrs. West, with the width of the room between them, caught Lee's troubled eye and said quietly: "Well, Ran?"

"Please do not talk to me—not now," pleaded Lee.

"There's not much to say, I admit."

"Then why say anything? We can still be as good friends as ever."

"Of course!" she replied, smiling, "better friends than ever."

Lee started and stared apprehensively at her. "You don't mean—"

"Good heavens! No. We're going to wear our uniform with honor—you poor, poor fool! How long do you suppose 'twill be before you need me desperately?—a year?—a month?—a day?"

"Stella!" muttered he hoarsely. "I—Look out! They're coming. Don't even look at me."

She did as he asked, walking casually to the window, where she remained looking out into the glorious night, while Lee, gently shaking the admiral, kept saying: "Admiral, Admiral, wake up, sir!"

"Time to turn in?" asked the admiral, rubbing his eyes.

"Here's your hat, Daddy, dear," sang out Kathy, running in, followed by Aunt Kate, who added: "Yes, Thomas, do come now."

"All right, Kate; we'll drink the bride's health and then go."

"No, sir!—not one more drop!" And she meant it, for she bundled him to the hall door without more ado.

On the threshold the admiral paused to say something not clearly audible about happily ever after, and with a final blessing—wig-wagged rather than spoken—he gave his arm to his sister and marched her off.

"It's only good-night, you know, and not good-bye," said Mrs. West as she threw a wrap about her bare shoulders and moved toward the door after kissing Kathy. "Captain Nash has invited me to come and see your ship off, to-morrow morning, Mr. Lee."

Lee bowed.

"Till the morning, then!" laughed Mrs. West, throwing a parting kiss to the bride, and was gone.

* * * * *

X

WITH the last click of the lock—the shutting out of her past and the shutting in of herself—Kathy felt an unutterable, insufferable, terrifying desire to escape, to reconsider, to regain, if only for an hour, the something she now regretted having lost. Anxiously, she looked up at—her husband! He was standing at some little distance from her, his deep, beautiful eyes filled with love and happiness and pride. Up-standing and clean and chivalrous, he looked, she thought, nobler and gentler and handsomer in his full dress uniform than she had ever seen him look before. Their eyes met and she tried to speak to him, but it was useless: the grip about her heart was too tight. So she rose and hurried out upon the little balcony, passing close to him as she went—and he understood and said nothing. While she struggled for peace and composure out there in the moonlight, he paced to and fro. Suddenly he heard her come into the room.

"Kathy!" he said yearningly when he turned and saw her.

"Ran!" she murmured, but remained standing where she was.

"Come, let us sit here awhile and let

the meaning of it all rise round us, Kathy, drowning out everything but you and me."

She let him lead her to the little divan by the fireplace and sat watching him without comment as he went about the sides of the room, putting out all the lights except the great lamp on the table. Presently he was sitting at her side—silent, exquisitely delicate, she felt he was while she too sat silently finding her way to words.

"Ran."

"Yes, darling?"

"What are you, Ran? Tell me."

"I am your husband; you are my wife—"

"And that means—what?"

"It means that now—at last—after the bitter waiting—we—you and I—"

"Tell me about yourself—your real self."

"I have no self now, darling, apart from you."

He thought she shrank away from him, but she merely repeated: "Tell me about yourself."

"To-night!" exclaimed Lee, laughing to dispel the strange mood which was beginning a little to nettle him. "Take time to-night to tell the sweet, sad story of my life? Don't ask me to do that."

She thought a moment and then said: "This is the only time—the only decent time—we'll ever have for such a talk. To-morrow'll be too late, for I'll be gone—I mean my old self will be gone—never to come back, Ran. I know. I know."

"Oh, come, sweetheart," he protested, slipping his arm about her and drawing her to him, "don't make me think you're sad. You're not sad, are you—at such a time as this?"

"No, I'm not sad—of course! Only I'm—"

He smothered with his kisses whatever she meant to say and was assuring her that she was only tired, nervous—no wonder! see what she had done to-day—when the sound of a bugle came floating through the night, the long-drawn notes swelling mournfully and then fainting away like sighs from the

soul of Regret; again the swelling, the fainting away.

"Hark! What's that?" asked Kathy.

"Taps."

"Listen!"

Sitting forward and with her finger to her lips she listened until the last pathetic note had quivered away into silence, and then said sadly: "I'm sorry that we heard taps to-night."

He caught her as she leaped to her feet and, pulling her down upon his lap, held her there, stopping her words with kisses and only relaxing his embrace when she thrilled him by saying quietly as she sat up straight and calm: "All right. I'll go—but you must give me time. Don't come to me for half an hour."

"All right, sweetheart—but—"

She darted into the room, shut the door behind her, and Lee thought he heard her turn the key in the lock—poor little frightened bird! Lighting the cigarette he had been craving, he hurried to the hall door and locked and bolted it, and then drew the curtains before the French windows and sat down. The rasping impertinence of the telephone-bell brought him to earth with a sense of vague disquiet.

"Who?" he asked curtly of the offending clerk at the desk downstairs, of course intending to refuse whoever it might be; but with a start that almost made him drop the receiver, he went on eagerly: "Oh, yes. Please ask the gentleman to come right up."

He hung up the receiver, dropped back upon the chair, and—waited.

XI

WHEN the evening wore away and no wedding party nor word of explanation reached Puck's Perch, Croft naturally fell to speculating upon woman in general and "Tell-Me" Trench in particular, the outcome being, that he unpacked his trunk, smoked a meditative pipeful, and reached the conclusion that when, in woman's mind, the irresistible force of new ideas meets the immovable body of old proclivities almost anything

is likely to happen. Also, more clearly than heretofore, he perceived the peril incurred by attempting to short-circuit the "life force" by means of the ground-wire of rationalized marriage. Then, the better to dismiss the subject, he strolled forth upon the little terrace and drank in the glory of the night. Far across the waters of the bay sparkled the lights of San Diego, while straight before him, on the slender sickle of the Coronado peninsula, twinkled the numberless windows of the great hotel—and that settled it! He would run over there and see what he should see.

As he made his way down from the cliffs the broad streak of moonlight mirrored in the tranquil surface of the bay suggested the idea of making the journey by water rather than by the much longer drive along the shore. One of his quaint old Portuguese fishermen at La Playa would ferry him, he knew, in his power launch; and he did, thus bringing Croft much sooner to the hotel. Admiral Trench could not be found, but a casual glance at the register revealed the fact that Lieutenant Lee had arrived during the day, and, despite the lateness of the hour, his visitor was cordially invited "to come right up." Croft went up—much of our going, both up and down, is in the dark—and to his unsuspecting knock the gate of paradise was most hospitably flung open.

"Ah, Mr. Croft—so good of you!"

"Pardon this unpardonably late call, Mr. Lee," laughed Croft, left still in total darkness by Lee's manner, "but when nobody showed up at eight bells I thought I'd come and pay my respects."

"As you have no telephone," explained Lee quietly, "we couldn't even apologize to you, but of course the admiral has explained things to you."

Croft gave it up. For a man who had expected to be married that evening and was not, Lee certainly showed commendable composure, not at all the sort of thing Croft would have looked for; so with mental apologies, he re-

plied: "No, I haven't seen the admiral. It seems that he and the ladies are spending the evening out."

"What!" gasped Lee. "You don't know, then?"

"Know what?" asked Croft serenely, but beginning to surmise much.

"Why, that we decided, at the last moment, to have the wedding here, and as there was no way to get word to you in time— No, please keep your seat. Mrs. Lee has retired, but I am delighted to—"

"Dear me!" exclaimed Croft, moving toward the door. "Why didn't the clerk tell me? This call is unpardonable. Congratulations!—my compliments to Mrs. Lee—and good night!"

"I really wish you'd stay," pleaded Lee with manifest sincerity, "for I want so much to know you better, Mr. Croft. You see I've just lighted this cigar—good for half an hour at least—so join me."

"Thanks, no," answered Croft, declining the proffered cigar but so sure of his host's truthfulness that he returned a little way from the door.

"A glass of champagne, then?" suggested Lee, taking Croft's hat.

"I'd rather have a drop of Scotch, if you have it."

"Certainly. Apollinaris or Seltzer?"

"Plain water, please."

Lee ran laughing into the dining-room—Croft's glimpse into it as the door was opened showed him it was the dining-room—leaving no doubt as to the genuineness of his welcome—and that at the upper left-hand corner was another door. Beyond it, Croft wondered, what maiden meditation was now taking place? Presently, however, Lee's return with the Scotch and plain water put an end to futile speculation, and Croft took the seat indicated by his genial host, opposite his own, by the little round table.

"Mr. Croft," began Lee after the due interchange of courtesies and a toast to the bride, "I can't tell you how much I appreciate all that you have done for Mrs. Lee. She tells me she owes you a great deal."

"On the contrary," replied Croft, "I owe her a great deal. One seldom gets quite such an opportunity to solve a problem."

"And what sort of a problem does Mrs. Lee present?"

"The problem," answered Croft, purposely disconcerting.

Lee laughed to hide his perplexity and then asked: "You mean?"

"That she's a woman; she has intelligence; and this is the twentieth century."

"And these three facts constitute a problem, you think?"

"The most disturbing problem of our times. To-day, when a man marries he doesn't take a wife, as men did formerly; no, he tackles the question of the Age!"

Again Lee laughed before inquiring: "Has it an answer?"

"Yes."

"In every case?"

"Why not?"

"What would you say the answer was in my case, Mr. Croft?"

"Yourself—just you yourself."

"You don't know me—I mean—"

"Does your wife know you?" broke in Croft, sheathing his blade with a smile.

Lee winced but instantly returned Croft's smile and said: "We've been engaged three years."

"Ah, then of course you must know one another perfectly," replied Croft, basing his seriousness on his conviction that Lee was of those happy mortals to whom sarcasm is Attic Greek. "I happen to know your wife, Mr. Lee, and I sincerely wish that I knew you as well. Mind telling me, as man to man, something about yourself?"

"Not in the least," laughed Lee. "I'm a lieutenant; twenty years hence, with luck, I'll be a captain; and then, after a good long wait, and if the luck still holds, I'll be rear admiral—by quitting on half pay! How's that for a career?"

Croft joined in the laugh, the quality of his mercy being strained to the breaking point by Lee's fatuousness, and realizing that there is nothing like

a laugh in the merciless surgery now called for.

"How's that for a career?" again asked Lee.

"But Mrs. Lee—will she have a career?"

"Why, yes," answered Lee, not altogether sure of his ground nor that such a question had any grounds, "she—she'll be my wife."

"No woman could desire more," Croft remarked seriously, "but the mischief is, that some women are beginning to have very decided notions about careering on their own hook."

"You read a good deal, don't you, Mr. Croft?"

"Yes—for an American. Don't you read, Lee?"

"Only works bearing upon my specialty—the science of gunnery. I have no time for general reading. I wish I had."

"It would be nice—now that you have a wife, you know, who reads pretty much everything. Gunnery, eh? Must be a thrilling study."

"I wonder if you're laughing at me," replied Lee, eyeing Croft uneasily; "The admiral warned me to look out for you."

"Really?" chuckled Croft. "Well, you see, Lee, like most Americans, the admiral thinks anything he can't quite understand must be suspicious or foreign or a joke."

"You seem to enjoy puzzling people."

"I do—immensely; it leaves one so free, you know."

"Free to laugh at those who don't feel free to laugh?"

"No, no," protested Croft eagerly, the joy of the chase filling his nostrils; "free to enjoy the game of blindman's buff so many men are playing, and free to speculate on what might happen if they would tear their blinders off and see some things."

"What things, for instance? I'm getting curious."

"Well," answered Croft with great good feeling, "since you insist upon particulars, I wonder what might happen if gentlemen of the old school—

the admiral, for example, or yourself, Lee—could realize as I do, that the cage doors are open."

Lee sensed something like danger lying beneath Croft's smile, so he pondered a moment before saying: "You mean, I take it, the domestic cage. The doors are open, are they? Do the birds know it?"

"Some of the wise she-birds are finding out."

Lee shared his merry laugh and then asked: "And when they find out that the doors are open—they fly away?"

"Sometimes; not as a rule, however," Croft answered, dropping his bantering tone for one of purely disinterested philosophizing. "The she-birds usually content themselves with little flights—not too far from the cage, but far enough to let their masters know that they could fly away—for good—at any moment. Then they fly back again into the dear old cage. You see, a cage is such a homelike place, when you've been kept in one most of your life; so snug and safe and cosy. Your little dish is filled for you each day with nice fresh seeds; your little bath supplied with nice clean water; your little perch hangs there, on which to sing all day and sleep all night; and although gilded bars may spell a prison, one thing is certain—the cat can't get you! Just naturally, therefore, nine she-birds out of ten throttle their inclinations and think of safety first—better be safe inside than free outside."

"But when a venturesome she-bird does try her wings outside—what happens then?" asked Lee, all his first suspicions allayed by Croft's delicious air of speculative humor.

"Ah, *then* men like the admiral say Rubbish! and men like you—what *would* you say then, Lee?"

"I? Why, I imagine that I would—"

Kathy's piteous cry of "Ran! Ran!" from within the bedroom brought both men to their feet.

"Yes, dearest, I'm right here," Lee called out, forcing a ghastly laugh into his voice, while a nameless terror

clutched at his heart and shame and chagrin showed in his drawn face.

"I'm off, old man," murmured Croft, moving toward the chair on which lay his hat.

"No!" retorted Lee, intercepting him. "She doesn't know you're here, and I must talk to you. Sit down."

"Oh, but see here, I really cannot stay. This is—"

But Lee stood fast. Tightly holding on to Croft's arm and facing him squarely he spoke with bitter determination. "I realize—awkward—impossible—infernal situation—but hang it all, I simply must explain."

"There's no misunderstanding—on my part," quietly answered Croft.

"I know you understand," replied Lee bitterly; "that's why I've let you talk to me the way you have. You know her better than I do. Tell me about her."

"The truth?"

"The truth."

"I've told you all I know. She is a woman, Lee; she has a brain; and the world moves. That's the whole story; that's what we're up against—not you alone, dear chap, but all of us. Every man jack of us will have to face it, from this time on."

"Face what, in God's name, man?"

"Why, that the cage is open and the she-birds know it."

"But get down to my case," pleaded Lee, nervously. "Remember I haven't seen her in three years. Somehow, I find her different, bewildering, baffling, out of my reach. I'd die to make her happy, Croft. Do you believe I can? Tell me the truth."

"Don't ask me to do that."

"But I demand it, Croft. My God! think what this means to me; just try to put yourself in my place, man. I married her this evening, and now—with me out here, waiting to go to her—she—she— You know what that cry meant. No two men ever stood as you and I stand now—so out with it! What chance have I to make this woman happy?"

Croft looked at him for a few sec-

onds and then said quietly: "None, I'm afraid."

Staggered for a moment, Lee muttered bitterly: "You do hit hard."

"You asked me for the truth: the truth is hard."

"I know," groaned Lee, covering his face with his trembling hands.

"It's a tremendous pity," went on Croft, laying a hand on Lee's arm, "that so few men seem to appreciate the change that's taking place in woman's mind. To-day, if you attempt to drive a woman against her will something is sure to break."

Lee stiffened and drew away, the glow of quickly growing suspicion and jealous pride driving from his eyes their expression of merely groping dread. When he spoke, it was with suppressed but threatening anger. "What do you mean, sir? If you insinuate that Mrs. Lee was forced against her will into this marriage—"

"Pardon me," broke in Croft. "I never insinuate. If I have anything to say, I say it; and now I say that I do know your wife, and after she and I had talked it over, this afternoon, I would have bet my life that there would be no marriage. Those are the facts, and you're at liberty to make your own deductions from them, as I have mine."

For an instant the "Regulations" proved efficacious: Lieutenant Lee superbly exemplified the enjoined virtue of self-control; but for an instant only. The man, the Southerner, the gentleman of the old school, could not be holden of any regulations based upon common sense. He was, purely and simply, jealous—therefore irrational, not to say ridiculous. Running Croft through with an eye-thrust that would have done the "Code" itself full justice, Lee laughed a hideous ironical "you're unmasked, villain!" laugh and said: "I understand, sir, and shall protect my honor. I shall not sail to-morrow!"

"Good!" exclaimed Croft in perfect cordiality. "But I thought your orders—"

"Forget my orders!" mutinied Lieu-

tenant Lee—what cares jealousy for any rules of reason or even of the navy?—but adding immediately, lest the civilian blaspheme: "I mean, sir, that if I cannot obtain permission to leave my ship, I can and will resign. You have kindly pointed out my problem. I'll stay and solve it—you hear me, sir?—solve it. What have you got to say, sir?"

"Merely, good evening, Mr. Lee," replied Croft, picking up his hat and smiling the smile of the imperturbable but nonetheless sympathetic spectator and calloused first-nighter witnessing just one more Comedy of Errors.

"Good night, sir," snapped out Lee, going to the hall door and holding it open.

On the threshold Croft paused as if he thought something might even yet be said or done in the interests of sanity, but the look on Lee's face evidently showed him the futility of all missionary efforts in this direction, for without another word he smiled, bowed, and passed out.

XII

HAVING banged the door after his visitor's exit, Lee looked at his watch. Suddenly the bedroom door was flung wide open and Kathy staggered out. Over her night-dress she had thrown a kimono, whose flaring front she clutched tightly with her one free hand. In the other hand she carried her shoes and stockings, while piled high on both arms was an embarrassing display of feminine apparel—stays, lingerie, what-not, plainly visible beneath the outer garments whereby she sought to hide them. Her hair hung in two braids, her little pink toes peeped from between the lacings of silk sandals, but notwithstanding all this—the suddenness of it all, her *deshabille*, the evidence it clearly was of an impending crisis—her expression was anything but tragic, her manner anything but hysterical.

"What does this mean?" gasped Lee, tottering backward as she moved with frigid determination into the room.

"That it must not be, it must not be. You'd hate me afterwards."

Stung by the calm way in which she announced the frightful menace to his pride and happiness, Lee sprang toward her with outstretched arms, but she cried him off so bitterly that he stopped and looked at her with abject confusion.

"Stop! Don't come near me, Ran, nor try to speak until I've told you everything. I married you because—because—oh, can't you see that it was not myself? You tempted me, you hurried me, you wouldn't let me think. Daddy and you, not I, decided everything. I was weak, Ran, yes, weak and foolish, but now I'm strong again, for I've had time to think. I'm sorry that I yielded to you—forgive me, Ran—but I will not be base as well as weak and foolish. So, Ran, it ends right here. *It—ends—right—here!*"

"But think! think, Kathy, think!" groaned Lee imploringly.

"I have thought, Ran, of everything, and I'm prepared to face whatever comes of this. I propose to live my life in my own way—free, Ran, and clean. There! now you know."

"But I'm afraid you don't know," answered Lee scornfully. "What are you going to do?"

"Dress."

"Come, darling, this won't do. You can't dress out here."

"I can if you will go."

"But I'm not going!"

"Then I can't dress."

With a laugh intended to reassure her, but which added only disgust and terror to her resolution, Lee swiftly took her in his arms. But she managed to squirm out and get back to a seat close to the telephone, which she pointed at, warningly.

"Well," asked Lee loftily, "what do you intend to do?"

"Sit here, I suppose, until it's time for you to go aboard your ship to-morrow morning."

"Ah, that's your plan," sneered Lee, throwing away what remained of his tentative diplomacy. "Allow me to in-

form you, Mrs. Lee, that I've decided not to sail to-morrow."

"What! But I thought—"

"Of course you thought," Lee cut her short, "but you thought wrong. How could you think that your devoted husband could tear himself away—after a night like this?"

His laugh curdled her feeling of simple pity and shrinking into one of contempt and defiance; so she asked coldly: "Suit yourself about going or staying, but what do you imagine you will gain by staying?"

"The satisfaction, at any rate, of watching my precious little she-bird take flying lessons," hissed Lee through his teeth; "yes, and to see that when she flies up to her Croft she does not stay too long."

Blinded by the sudden revelation of his vileness, Kathy leaped to her feet, wild, scorching words rushing to her lips, but perishing unspoken there, so deep was her emotion.

"Sit down," commanded her husband, and, mechanically, she dropped back upon the chair and studied the pattern on the rug at her feet. "Look up at me, Kathy," implored her lover, but she heard him not; the rug seemed to absorb her entire consciousness. Dragged on a full minute of silence and then very tenderly he spoke her name and this time she looked up.

"It's all over, Ran," she assured him calmly.

"No, Kathy, it's just begun. I'm not the fool you think me; I understand too well. But tell me one thing: Why did you stoop to this infernal mockery to-night, when you were free? That's what I can't make out—why you did this. Have you no decency, no shame, no sense of honor?"

"You had my promise and you held me to it—the promise which I gave before I knew."

"Knew what?"

"What marriage ought to be. It was contemptible in me to let you drive me into it, but I'd be vile and low and cowardly, unless I stop right here."

"Huh!" sneered Lee, "why don't you tell the truth?"

"I've told the truth; there's nothing more to tell."

"There is—and I will tell it," retorted Lee, gripping her wrist and bending his face down close to hers. "You married me because for some good reason you could not marry him; and, woman-like, you wanted somebody to catch worms for you. All she-birds do."

Too outraged to speak, she let him go on: "You wanted somebody to keep your cage provided, some poor blind dupe of a deluded husband who'd pay the bills and let you make your unsuspected flights up to Puck's Perch."

"Oh, this is—"

"Be quiet! And hear me. That's why you married me. But when you listened in there just now and heard his voice and what he had the infamous audacity to say about wives being caged birds—why, then, I reckon your love for him—no, I won't dishonor that sacred word, not love—something got the best of you and so you—"

"Stop, Ran! I shan't submit to this."

But he was frenzied and went on, pushing her back into the seat: "You heard his insinuations about the cage being open, his reminders that you could still be his, and you recoiled—"

Came now the blessed relief of tears, the timely let-down in tension of chafed strings, and Kathy sobbed and otherwise behaved herself after her kind, that is to say, in the manner best calculated to reinforce her own position while affording the enemy neither aid nor comfort. Lee reacted at once. From a jealous maniac hurling vile insults, he turned into an amorous husband stooping tenderly over his sorrowing spouse to caress her hair and breathe her beloved name into her ear, mate cooing to mate, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

"Kathy!"

"Please!" she murmured, pushing him away and once more succumbing to the flood, weeping and laughing al-

ternately in a most distressing and perplexing way.

Utterly at sea as to her real state of mind, Lee, crying out: "You are mine—mine, mine!" suddenly took her in his arms. But with frantic strength she was striking his face, struggling and kicking and—laughing! That laugh was Lee's undoing. In view of it he set her on her feet, bowed gallantly, and turned on his heel. The instant his back was turned, Kathy had darted off like a frightened doe, gathered her clothes into her arms, and, crying hysterically, rushed out into the corridor—to freedom!

XIII

ALTHOUGH it was past midnight when Croft reached the city, and all of a dozen stiff miles lay between him and the Perch, he suffered the chauffeurs to sleep on unmolested in their taxis at the ferry-landing and set out afoot. Always the giant shoulder of Point Loma looked nearer than it was, the short bee-line across the water tending to make one forget how long was the great sweeping curve of the shore along which one must travel to reach the point. But the night was perfect, the comedy of errors witnessed that evening had furnished rather too much and indigestible food for speculation, and Croft, from long experience, knew that there is nothing like walking to stimulate the normal secretions requisite for sane excogitation. Naturally, the peripatetic philosopher, since he keeps moving, has one advantage over the sedentary—his point of view keeps moving; he sees the length and breadth of the whole subject. So Quentin Croft invariably walked.

Already the bird's-egg blue of the eastern skyline over the rugged peak of Cuyamaca, till now suffused with silvery sub-tropical moonlight, was faintly paling into the opalescent pearl-grey of false dawn when Croft, tingling with the grateful feeling of fatigue after his long, fast walk, let himself into his studio. Having shot the rude wooden bolt

of his door, he lit the big table-lamp, looked at his watch, stretched himself, yawned, and sat down for the usual consolation puff at his pipe before going to bed and the delicious sleep he felt in his bones awaited him.

His reverie was short, however. In the absolute stillness his ear had caught the sound of footsteps, not coming up the trail, but at the back of the house, where no path was. He sat upright in his chair to listen. There could be no mistake now: someone was creeping cautiously over the edge of the cliff behind the studio, as if trying to descend to the little terrace before the door. Rising quickly, he took his automatic gun from the table-drawer and tip-toed to the door. The next moment, whoever it was had reached the steps. Supposing it must be some half-breed Chollo—hundreds of them were camped half a mile away, engaged in building the military road—many of them vicious-looking cut-throats—Croft flung wide the door and cried: "Who's there?"

Kathy, hatless, wearing no wrap over her thin street dress, panting and wildly excited, fairly stumbled into the room.

"Oh, Puck," she gasped, "thank God you're here!"

"I'm apt to be home at this hour," laughed Croft, quietly slipping the foolish-looking gun into a side pocket, "but you mustn't stay, no, not a moment."

"But I must. I need you—desperately!"

"Where's Lee?"

"I don't know where he is—and I don't care."

Croft whistled softly.

"It's all over," announced Kathy with tragic finality—what so tragic as one and twenty?—and collapsed into a chair.

"So soon?" murmured Croft.

"Yes, it had to be," answered Kathy, so seriously that Croft perceived afresh that, generally speaking, one is safe in tipping one's shafts with irony. "Of course," she went on, "it was terrible—what I went through before I made up my mind; but as soon as I had made it

up I told Ran—and left him. Please tell me that I did right.”

“First let me make a fire. You’re cold.”

“No, I’m not, really.”

“Nonsense! You’re shivering.”

“I’m nervous, I suppose. It wasn’t easy.”

“Easy!” chuckled Croft, on his knees on the hearth, the big bellows in his hand, “I should say not! The boldest thing a woman can do is to defy fashion. You’ve set a brand new fashion for brides to follow. Easy! Lord!”

“Don’t laugh.”

“At lover’s tragedies I’ll bet Jove laughs,” replied Croft, pumping away at the bellows. “I’d be a multi-millionaire if I could put up laughter in bottles and advertise it as the sure cure for nerves.”

“I don’t believe you’ve got a nerve in your whole body,” laughed Kathy, melting in the glow of the first leaping flames on the hearth.

“I used to have one,” answered Croft, “but I had it cut out.”

“You always make me feel better. I do feel better.”

“Ah, that’s more like it,” applauded Croft, dusting the ashes from his knees and seating himself beside her. “Now, Pal, for the story. Don’t get stirred up. Tell me what happened.”

“Well,” she began, “you can imagine, can’t you, what happened when I told Ran? It was just awful. At first, he seemed surprised, then hurt, then jealous, and then he grew so violent that I rushed out in terror. You understand?”

“Of course—but why did you come up here?”

“Where else could I go?” she asked with an injured air. “If I had gone to Daddy he would have stopped at nothing—you don’t know Daddy—but would have carried me to Ran by force. The Skipper thinks a woman is like a ship—orders are orders, and some *man* must command.”

The driftwood fire burst into a pyrotechnic eruption which called for Croft’s instant service as a volunteer

fireman, so Kathy went on: “Luckily, I thought of Mrs. West—you know, the lady who was up here yesterday afternoon with Daddy.”

“Yes, I remember Mrs. West—distinctly,” answered Croft, kicking a glowing cinder back upon the hearth.

“Somehow, I can’t help liking her,” Kathy digressed, “although those gossips at the hotel pick her to pieces. She’s frank and genuine and so—so—big-hearted, you know. It’s funny so many people are wicked *and* nice.”

“Perhaps that’s why so many of us don’t care to go to Heaven—most of the genuine big-hearted ones going to the other place.”

She began to laugh but recollected at once her tragic situation and went on seriously: “I rushed to Mrs. West’s apartment. She wasn’t there; so I gave her maid ten dollars, told her it was a lark, scrambled into my clothes, scribbled a note of explanation to Mrs. West—and flew.”

“About what time was it?”

“Can’t say, exactly: eleven o’clock, perhaps, or later; I don’t know.”

“And just got here—at dawn!”

“Well, you see,” Kathy hastened to explain as pleadingly as though Croft had intimated that he suspected her of heinous wrong-doing of some sort—a habit of hers, by the way, which materially increased for him the joy of life; “You see, the last ferry had left for the city, so we had to go all the way around the lower end of the bay—fifty miles if it’s an inch—and as I didn’t want the strange chauffeur to know where I was going, I dismissed the car at Roseville and walked the rest of the way. Fearing that I might run across soldiers or fishermen on the road, I climbed to the top of the cliffs and got here by breaking a brand new trail through the brush.”

“It’s been a memorable night for breaking brand new trails.”

“I love you when you say things like that—so big and brave and—and—well, you know what I mean. But tell me, Puck, were you at the hotel last night?”

“I was.”

"And did you come up to the room and talk to Ran?"

"I did."

"About she-birds and the cage-door being open and—"

"Eavesdropping! Fie!"

"No, honestly, I didn't hear a word," again pleaded Kathy with the importunity of a burglar caught red-handed but trying to establish an alibi. "*Won't* you believe me? I didn't hear a word, nor dream that you were there; only—only— No matter now; I'm free!"

"Evidently—but there's such a thing as the future, remember."

"I'm not afraid."

"That's why I'd look ahead a bit if I were you. The timid are not bothered, but people are afraid of all who're not afraid, and make it hot for them."

"People! Who cares for people?"

"Our dear relations care."

"Bother our dear relations!"

"Unfortunately, it's our relations who bother us."

"You mean—" She stopped short and started half-way to her feet, listening. "Didn't you hear a funny noise outside, just now?"

"What! Nerves again?"

"No, I'm not nervous now. I'm worried—about Ran."

Croft could not quite suppress his joy. The Eternal Feminine!—what an unending source of delight to him! Delicious inconsistency, thy name is woman. Here she was "worrying" over the man whom she had left with loathing. Yet did the piteous little face appeal so strongly to him that he compressed his laugh into a smile and said: "Don't worry about Ran. He wouldn't dream of suicide until he's perfected that wonderful torpedo."

The argument must have seemed cogent to her, for she leaned back upon the cushions, quite calm and reassured.

"Puck," she said after thinking a little.

"Pal?"

"What do you really think will come of this?"

"There'll be the devil to pay."

He spoke so soberly that she sat up

again and looked alarmed; so he went on, at once, more in his usual vein of whimsy salted with wisdom: "There'll be the devil to pay—there always is, you know, when anything worth while is done; but pshaw! what of it? It's cheaper to pay the devil than to be dunned by self-appointed agents trying to collect for God."

Kathy laughed and then, serious again, inquired: "But why pay for it, when you've done nothing wrong?"

"Ah, but it's not a question of right and wrong: we have to pay for anything we do that's different, yes, that's it—different! You've done what not one woman in a million would ever dream of doing."

"And they will hate me for it?"

"Of course! That's human nature," answered Croft, rising and looking down at her with smiling earnest eyes. "The next time you're in church or at the theater or any public place, look at the women round you—the married ones, I mean, whom one sees everywhere without their husbands. Study the faces of these loveless wives. Two-thirds of them no longer love their husbands, but go on living with them. Are they ashamed of this? Not in the least. They have invented all sorts of virtuous names for lifelong degradation—duty, the sanctity of holy wedlock, wifely devotion, and all the rest. Well now, what you have done to-night will show them up, and so, just naturally, they'll call you down."

Glowing with appreciation of his ever-readiness to throw her a life-line at the moment she most needed buoyancy, no less than enjoying his quaint skill in doing it, Kathy grasped his hand and was looking her thanks up at him, when with a little cry of terror she sprang to her feet.

"Didn't you hear it then?" she whispered after listening a moment.

"It's nothing. Sit down. See!—it's almost daybreak."

"There! Surely, you heard it then."

This time, Croft had heard it, but realizing the urgent need of discreet calmness on her part if the sound meant

Lee, he laughed and said: "Coyotes, probably. They often sneak about here hunting for food."

"No, it was not coyotes; it sounded like a footstep. Please look outside."

Convinced that somebody was coming up the trail, but laughing as if he did so only to humor her, Croft went to the window, peered out, and returned at once to her, shaking his head. Quivering with forebodings of—she didn't know what she dreaded, Kathy met him as he came down to her, flinging her arms about him and clinging to him. At that moment Lee pressed his face against the window and watched them.

"Come, come, Pal, this won't do," said Croft, supporting her. "Buck up, buck up!"

"Oh, I can't help it, Puck," moaned Kathy, clinging the tighter to him. "You don't know all. Ran—he insulted me—said I'm in love with you—that you and I—oh, I can't tell you, Puck, all that he dared to say. Be careful, won't you? With his insane suspicions and his ideas of honor, who knows what he might do? Why, he might even—" A sharp peremptory knock at the door made her shrink away from Croft, her heart in her throat. "It's Ran," she whispered when she could breathe.

XIV

IN the silent seconds which passed before there came another and more impatient knock at the door Croft visibly straightened and squared himself for action. Forcing Kathy into a seat near the fire, he placed himself between her and the door, instinctively slipping his hand into his pocket and closing his fingers upon the pistol. Every principle of his philosophy outraged, every fibre of his feeling sickened, by the absurdity of the whole thing, he almost loathed himself for not running to the door and telling the jealous little idiot what a ridiculous and antiquated libel he was on Man. But Croft was a great reader: he read newspapers; therefore he knew how foolish are such dreamers as

fondly dream that culture and philosophy have undermined tradition. Culture! Philosophy! The officer and gentleman now pounding at his door was nothing more nor less than a primeval brute distorted into worse by age-long superstitions and canting codes of conduct. Disgusting, certainly, to have to countenance it, but dangerous to ignore it.

"Here, let me in!" demanded Lee, kicking the door.

"Steady, Pal, steady!" murmured Croft, waving Kathy back.

"Come, let me in, I say," thundered Lee, "or I'll break in."

"The door's not locked. Come in," sang out Croft cheerily.

Throwing open the door but barely crossing the threshold, Lee lifted his hat and said frigidly: "Pardon my early call, sir; it will be brief."

"Won't you be seated, sir?" asked Croft, mercilessly cordial.

"Thank you, but I can't stay, sir," replied Lee so calmly that Croft had to check an impulse to pat him on the back for his sportsmanship and sanity. "I'm here at the request of Admiral Trench. He's in the car, below. May I report to him that Mrs. Lee will see him?"

"Why, yes—of course," cried Kathy, "but nothing he can say will matter."

"Probably not," answered Lee, still looking at Croft, "but he will see that my suspicions were only too well founded."

"Ran!"

"Oh, see here, Mr. Lee!" interposed Croft quietly.

"I'll settle my account with you, sir, at my convenience," retorted Lee in a way sure to have captured the gallery.

"You're not a Shavian, I see," commented Croft in a way not at all sure to have captured even the two-dollar stalls.

"With your permission, Mrs. Lee, I'll notify the admiral that you will see him," announced Lee, bowing stiffly to Kathy, scorning to look at Croft, and hurrying out—a thrilling "exit."

Croft gazed after him through the window, whistling softly an air out of

"Thais," and then turned and walked down to where Kathy sat glum.

"Well?" she asked as he stood looking down at her.

"I warned you," he replied, smiling: "If she-birds fly away they must look out for cats."

"But why can't people let other people be?"

"The kingdom of heaven is not at hand—just yet."

"But you'll stand by me, won't you?"

"Of course—to the last ditch."

"Nor leave me alone with them one minute?"

"Great Scott!" laughed Croft, already moving toward the little door opposite the fireplace, "don't ask me to attend this family reunion."

"But—please—I need you," she implored.

"I'm sure the regulations forbid the presence of a civilian at a court-martial," chuckled Croft, adding at once, however, when he saw how really perturbed she was: "But now don't worry, Pal. Stand pat; that's all. I'll be in the next room. If you should need me, call me."

She was framing some argument or other to keep him with her, when voices were heard approaching near the top of the trail. Signalling courage, Croft hurried into the adjoining room and shut the door just as the house door was opened and Admiral Trench, followed by Aunt Kate and Lee, entered in high debate. The poor admiral was evidently suffering from an acute attack of remorse, due to his indiscreet devotion to the bride's health, the previous evening, and rather accentuated than relieved by the brief slumber he was permitted to enjoy before they routed him out of his bed to tell him—this! As for Aunt Kate, that worthy lady was simply, as she herself had put it, crushed, yes, crushed.

"I'll wait outside, sir," said Lee, going out and shutting the door.

"Daddy!" Kathy had got to her feet and now stood trembling before the frightful realization of her father's wrath and Aunt Kate's sorrow.

"Don't daddy me, miss!" roared the admiral, lurching forward. "Here's a fine how-d'ye-do! If you imagine for one moment that I'll put up with your outrageous—" He clutched his splitting head with both hands, fell into a chair, and said: "You do the talking, Kate."

"Yes, Thomas," sobbed Aunt Kate, "do let me reason with her. No man can understand, but I do—perfectly."

"I wish you did, Aunt Kate."

"What nonsense, child—as if I didn't! I was a bride myself, remember, and wanted to leave my husband. I guess I understand."

"Yes, that's just it, Aunt Kate," volleysed Kathy, conscious of firmer ground; "you wanted to leave your husband, but didn't leave him. I wanted to leave mine—and left him! That's just the difference between us; that's why I'm sure that you don't understand."

"You—you—you little—" began the admiral, but rage and remorse choked him and he could only wave a signal to keep on firing.

"I wanted to have a good frank talk with you last night," went on Aunt Kate, vainly striving to dam back the tears.

"It would have made no difference, Aunt Kate."

"It would have spared you all your ignorant misgivings," argued Aunt Kate, adding when Kathy's only reply was an ironical and knowing laugh: "Trust to my wisdom and experience, Kathy. Tell Ran you're sorry."

"*Never!*" proclaimed Kathy with the lavish grimness with which youth brought to bay draws drafts upon despair.

"He is your lawful husband."

"And marriages are made in Heaven—why don't you tell me that?"

"I-I-I'll teach you to blaspheme!" snarled the admiral.

"Do be calm, Thomas," implored Aunt Kate, emerging, by this, from the lachrymose to the bellicose. "Kathy, you don't know what you're doing. This is sheer nonsense."

"But it's not vile and base," retorted Kathy, oddly enough emboldened by the enemy's change of weapons from tears to taunts, "and that's what you want me to be—vile and base and low!"

"Katherine!"

"It makes me furious," flared away Kathy, "to think that you—you with your everlasting talk about decency—can ask me to be indecent. You said, just now, a man can't understand. I agree with you. But you, Aunt Kate, you ought to understand, though Daddy can't, that if I feel as I do feel about it, the only decent thing to do is what I've done."

"Can you forget your vows?"

"Although I can't forget them, I can break them!"

Signs were not wanting that the admiral disapproved of Kathy's last proposition, but his precise views were lost in an explosion of apoplectic snorts and gurglings, not unmixed with profanity.

"Is nothing sacred to you?" inquired Aunt Kate, after the manner of such as beg the question and are proud of it.

"Oh, yes," sang Kathy ecstatically, "my right to my own soul is very sacred to me."

"Has Mr. Lee—your husband, recollect—has he no rights?"

"None over me."

"You evidently don't know the law."

"I know this much—that marriage isn't binding until— But anyhow, if I were ten times married, there's a way out."

"Divorce!" gasped Aunt Kate, collapsing under the thought of moral chaos.

"Why, yes, of course! Why not?" came back Kathy brazenly enough. "Aren't half the women at the hotel divorced—especially the ones the Skipper is most devoted to?"

"B-r-r-r-r!"

"But I don't like divorce," elucidated Kathy, "because it's not enough that wives can break the harness. They'll hitch the next bride up the same old way. No, what we want to-day is an entirely new and better style of harness

—the sort no decent woman would want to break."

"Merciful heavens! hear that!" groaned the admiral.

"But what have you against poor Randolph, Kathy?" asked Aunt Kate.

"Only that I don't love him."

"Well, foolish girl, how many wives do love their husbands?"

The admiral winced. His ally's strategical blunder was too funny. He laughed and laughing hurt his head much more than scowling; so he resumed his scowl and tried to mask his laugh behind a fit of coughing.

"Precious few wives have much love for their husbands after the honeymoon," went on Aunt Kate as soon as Kathy's merriment abated. "They have respect, however, and set their love to simmer until the babies come."

"That's your idea of marriage, is it, Aunt Kate, and love? Well, it's not mine. I think the babies that don't come through love would best not come at all."

Aunt Kate was overwhelmed with shame, so the admiral, not very clear as to just what was called for, rushed to the rescue of the moralities by exclaiming: "I'll have you understand, miss, that I shan't let you play ducks and drakes with morals, no, nor besmirch my honor!"

"Your honor!" cried Kathy. "What right have you to talk of honor while you're both trying to badger me into dishonor?"

"You heard the solemn words the minister pronounced above you," argued Aunt Kate: "Whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder."

"I know," laughed Kathy, "but, honestly, Aunt Kate, the chaplain should have said 'Those whom the admiral hath forced together!'"

Again did apoplexy come near to ending everything.

"I'm through, I tell you, Daddy, through!"

And yet again it seemed as though the admiral's end was come.

"Very well, Kathy," announced Aunt

Kate, shaking the dust from off her missionary feet with a mind conscious to itself of right; "I've done my very best to make you see the terrible mistake you're making in losing such a man as Randolph Lee—a perfect gentleman, an officer with brilliant prospects, the only son of one of the most wealthy and influential families in all Virginia."

"Why don't you tell me in so many words to sell myself? That's what it comes to." So vehement was Kathy in giving this last thrust that Aunt Kate, already near the breaking point, retired precipitately to that last citadel of injured innocence—hysterics. While the admiral made a demonstration in force, circling about and expressing himself incoherently on a number of subjects, related and unrelated, Kathy rendered first aid to the injured feelings—yielding not an inch, however—and was thus employed when the door was opened and Lee appeared.

"Pardon me, Admiral, but Mrs. West is here, demanding to see you, sir. I tried to explain to her, but—"

"Good morning, everybody," trumpeted Mrs. West joyously, brushing Lee aside and running in. "Why, what's the matter with us all, this morning?" she asked, turning from one troubled face to the other. "You look as though you didn't have me to fall back on."

"Confound it, madam," exploded the admiral, "this is no time for nonsense."

"No, Admiral, I should say not!—that's why I hope you'll take a friendly hint from me and go right home. Kathy, where's Puck?"

"Somewhere about the place," Kathy replied, adding imploringly: "but please don't wait to see him, Mrs. West. Something has happened and—and—Won't you please go?"

"Yes, dear, at once. This is my busy day, so I can't wait. Just tell Puck it's all right—everything's lovely—he'll understand—and I'll be back again in fifteen minutes, tell him."

"You've all gone crazy!" growled the admiral, grasping his own sorely muddled head.

"No, Admiral," laughed Mrs. West, "nobody's crazy but Mr. Lee and you. Oh, by the way, Aunt Kate, I've got to go and telephone at once—just at the wireless station, you know—back in no time. The drive will do you good, so come along."

"I th-th-think not, th-th-thank you," sobbed Aunt Kate.

"Yes, Kate, for heaven's sake clear out!" ordered the admiral; "I can put up with anything but tears."

Urged thereto by grateful looks from Kathy, Mrs. West grabbed Aunt Kate's arm and shanghaied that utterly perplexed and sorrowing soul out of the room, chattering as they went: "Sunrise is lovely. I saw it myself, you know, some years ago, so I can recommend it and you'll be sure to thank me. You've no idea how—" *Exeunt.*

XV

HAVING bowed the ladies out and shut the door Lee turned and walked to where the admiral sat moaning and uttering curses not loud but deep as he rubbed his aching head.

"Well, Admiral, have you explained the situation to Mrs. Lee?"

The admiral waved him away with a gesture of final woe, the thumping of innumerable steam-hammers in his head—temporarily turned into a boiler-shop—making it impossible to explain that he couldn't explain.

"I did the explaining, Ran," said Kathy, coming from her corner into the firing zone; "the thing is settled."

"Are you the only one concerned?" asked Lee, prudently humble.

"Well, I'm the only one who could decide—and I've decided."

"We'll see about that!" threatened the admiral, the hammers having stopped. "You needn't think that just because you—Finish it, Lee," he whined, the hammers having begun again.

"Kathy," cried Lee, going and facing her suppliantly, "it's not too late. Let us forget last night and start afresh."

"Can you forget? I can't."

"I know I said and did things, Kathy, I'd give my life now to undo, but I was mad, remember. What man could pass through such a terrible ordeal and not go mad? Won't you be generous and brave enough to overlook the past and face the future?"

"Why, Ran, the kindest thing I ever did was leaving you. You'll see it, too, some day. As for the future, I'm going to face it bravely—but not with you!"

The admiral staggered to his feet and glared at her, but such a jumble of denunciations crowded for utterance that the words jammed in his throat.

"It's just this, Daddy," said Kathy, assisting nature to reseal him: "Whatever anybody else may think or say, I think and say that it is vile and low for any woman to live with any man unless she wants to. I do *not* want to live with Ran—so I'm not going to."

"Thunder and lightning! will you please hear that?" stormed the admiral. "Why did you marry him, I'd like to know, if you didn't want to?"

"You ask me that?" Kathy came back at him on the flood of long-dammed filial resentment. "You wouldn't let me think; you wouldn't give me time; you forced me to decide and to decide your way. That's what you've always done. You've treated me as though I had no will nor judgment of my own. And now, when you have driven me to your will, you ask me why I did it!"

In the total disability of the flagship, Lee came into action, remarking bitterly: "But you did marry me."

"Ran, listen to me," replied Kathy, calmly; "Please realize how suddenly the whole thing came upon me. I begged for time to think—two weeks—forty-eight hours—one day—but no, you wouldn't wait, it must be now or never! Then Daddy took it upon himself, as he has always done, to decide for me. Blame him, blame his idea of woman, but don't blame me."

While the admiral choked and sputtered in a fruitless effort to express his feelings, Lee paced about the room in manifest deliberation over conflicting impulses. When, at last, he came and

confronted the others his previous air of sorrowful anxiety had vanished; in its place was a look of withering, not to say blood-curdling, disdain.

"Admiral Trench," he began with sublime Fifth-Act, plot-clinching, climax-precipitating deliberateness, "this hideous travesty must end. I hoped, sir, to save the lady's honor and to spare your feelings, but now, sir, I'll tell the truth. The reason, the one and only reason, that Mrs. Lee declines to live with me is—that she loves another!"

"Ran!" cried Kathy, turning instinctively to her father, rightly expecting results, at once definite and strenuous, from that quarter.

"Lee!—if—you—say—o n e word!" The old man crunched each word between his teeth before spitting it out, his face purple with rage and his knotted nervous fingers gripping ominously the arms of the chair.

"I shall say nothing, sir, that is not true," answered Lee, loftily secure on the heights of virtuous indignation. "I told you we would find her, not with her friends in town, as you supposed, but up here with this man. You see, sir, I was right."

"Ran!"

"Lee!"

"It's common gossip, sir," went on Lee cynically, "and I was duly warned, but, like a blinded fool, I wouldn't believe the truth—until it was too late."

The father looked at the daughter. She stood defiant, contemptuous, silent.

"Deny it, girl," piteously implored the father; "deny it for God's sake!"

"She won't deny it, sir," sneered Lee with confidence; "she knows I have the proof."

Once more the father looked at the daughter. Once more she stood defiant, contemptuous, silent.

"You!" groaned the father, frenzied with shame and grief and staggering toward her with clenched uplifted fist.

"Wait, father, wait!" shrieked Kathy, backing away from the horror of the bare thought of such a blow: "I can explain it all." But in the mind of such

a father all the foundations of love and sanity crumbled beneath her seeming wantonness, so he lurched madly toward her and she, crying "Puck! Puck!" ran round the table and flung herself against the door, whence help and understanding alone could come.

"Steady, Pal, steady," urged Croft under his breath as he opened the door and saw her.

"If Ran has anything to say, now is the time to say it," Kathy hurled back at them from the security of Croft's heroic lack of heroics.

"Good morning, Admiral," said Croft with simple cordiality, but on receiving only a threatening grunt from the admiral and a still uglier intimation from Lee, he whispered something to Kathy, pointed to the adjoining room, smiled, and shut the door behind her as she passed out.

XVI

"ONCE more, good morning, Admiral."

"Lee has just put you, sir, in a damned ugly light," said the admiral grimly as Croft sauntered toward them.

"I can't imagine why," mused Croft, waving his visitors to be seated—in vain.

"Confound you, man!" thundered the admiral; "drop your infernal airs and face the charges."

"Dear me! It's come to charges, has it?"

"Which can be proved," smashed Lee.

"Won't you be seated, gentlemen? No? Then pardon me, please, if I sit down alone—no sleep last night, you know—and now if you don't mind, I'd like to hear the charges."

"You didn't go straight home from the hotel last night," charged Lee with the dramatic iciness of an attorney who knows he knows.

"I didn't go straight home from the hotel last night," admitted Croft, with the phlegmatic insouciance of the attorney's witness who knows he knows the attorney.

"You took a taxi," Lee prodded.

"I took a taxi," Croft echoed.

"With a lady," gloated Lee.

"With a lady," glowed Croft.

"W-w-what's that!" bellowed the admiral menacingly.

"Permit me, admiral," Lee interposed. "Well, Mr. Croft, the lady did not join you in the hotel lobby, but out behind the shrubbery near the rear entrance, and—she was thickly veiled!"

Croft laughed aloud—Lee's air of the stage detective "grilling" his man was too much for him—and then said casually: "Now that you mention it, I really think the lady did wear a veil. Yes, I remember; I cautioned her against the gossips and she pulled down her veil."

"My God!" muttered the admiral, too flabbergasted to think.

"There, Admiral," Lee summed up crushingly, "the man himself admits all that the servants hinted. The rest is plain: he brought the lady here soon after midnight, and here we find them both—at dawn!"

"If it's true, Croft—!" muttered the admiral, lurching forward with hands held out and fingers itching to throttle something; but Croft's smile disconcerted him; it had a way of disconcerting people.

"If all this tommyrot of Lee's were true, I ask you, Admiral Trench, would I be quite such an egregious ass as to wait here for you to come and catch me? His drivel makes me sick; yes, and what's more, sir, if you propose to let this jealous maniac discuss your daughter's virtue, I do not."

Lee sprang for him, but Croft's laugh and the admiral's blue streak of deprecatory oaths postponed hostilities.

"Come, Mr. Lee," said Croft, when the admiral had planted himself between the high contending parties, "except for bits of gossip picked up by bribing servants, and which you've pieced together to suit your jealous fears, you have no actual knowledge, have you, of what took place?"

"Not what took place last night," admitted Lee, glaring over and then un-

der the arm the admiral held out in the interests of peace, "but what took place up here."

"Ah!" exclaimed Croft, "so it was you that we heard prowling about soon after the lady came? We thought it was coyotes, but it was only—you!"

The admiral's arm sawed the air like a distracted semaphore and his diminutive body wrought miracles as an animated and somewhat volcanic buffer state. Yet was sweet peace maintained.

"The window has no blind," Croft pointed out, "the door is thin, so, Mr. Lee, you must have seen and heard all that went on in here."

"I saw and heard enough," growled Lee with jaws set firm.

"You bet you did!" chuckled Croft amiably; "enough to turn your previous ideas clear over, Mr. Lee, on their beam ends."

"Damn it all, Croft," erupted the admiral suddenly, "cut out this nonsense, can't you, and get down to the facts."

"What would be left of this," laughed Croft, "if we cut out the nonsense? I'll tell you, Admiral, all that he saw and heard, even if he began to spy as soon as Kathy came. He saw a man and woman up here, alone, quite free, as they supposed, from observation. He heard them talk—not in the least like lovers, but like old pals—about all sorts of things—life, cats, the devil, relations, the right of every one to his own soul—and goodness knows what else. That's what he saw and heard, and that is all. Caesar's ghost! Lee, what with our talk last night and what you heard up here, you got a liberal education, I should say. Admit it like a man and—shake!"

To such sweet reasonableness the admiral saw no necessity to interpose a barrier, so he stepped aside for Croft to try to reach Lee's hand with his own eagerly outstretched one. Alas! honor felt still unpaid.

"How dare you offer your hand to me, sir?" snapped Lee viciously. "I'll show you how a gentleman defends his honor."

Quick though Lee was, the admiral

proved quicker and gripped Lee's wrist effectively before he reached his gun.

"Thanks, Admiral," said Croft, purposely offhand, "but at the same time taking his own gun from his pocket and toying with it caressingly, "now that the gentleman has mentioned honor, he probably means murder; so, Mr. Lee, I'll have to trouble you to hand the admiral your gun."

Lee obeyed only after a careful study of Croft's smiling face revealed a surgeon-like readiness to operate, however distastefully, if the necessity arose.

"Thank you," murmured Croft as Lee turned over the weapon, "that's safer. Putting aside all consideration of my own career, think what a pity it would be to bring the scandal of a murder upon the navy."

With a look which meant impending Nemesis, but also with a bow indicating that Nemesis had agreed to accept deferred payment, Lee turned on his heel and started for the door. Before he reached it, however, it was thrown open and Mrs. West, bubbling over with news, came rushing in.

"Good gracious! Mr. Lee, are you still here?" she bubbled. "Do you realize the ship sails in three hours?"

"I can drive over to the pier in half an hour," retorted Lee ungraciously.

"Yes," she answered, winking knowingly at Croft and the admiral, "but you'll need time to pack, for you're not sailing, you know."

Staggered, Lee could no more than stare incredulously at Mrs. West and then appealingly at Admiral Trench.

"If you're not crazy, madam," exclaimed the admiral, "I wish—"

"But it's true, Admiral!" broke in Mrs. West, nodding thanks to Croft for his "I-get-you" smile; "the captain has just telephoned me that Mr. Lee has been detached from the ship and ordered to report immediately in Washington—the Ordnance Department, Mr. Lee, where you can work at your torpedo to your heart's content. How's that?"

"But—but," Lee stammered, on the verge of blubbing, "we wired to every

man in Washington that we could think of—without results!"

"Nothing like knowing how," chor-tled Mrs. West. "I simply sent one telegram—to the right place, of course—and—presto!"

"How can I ever express my gratitude for this?" Lee asked.

"Oh, there'll be something, sometime, that you can do for me," she replied, looking Lee full in the eye, but managing at the same time to crook a finger summoning Croft beside her; "but I don't want you to suppose you've only me to thank. No, Mr. Lee, thank Mr. Croft as well, for if he hadn't consented to take me in his taxi and to the ship, I couldn't have possibly seen Captain Nash at midnight."

Lee swallowed hard; the admiral ceased swallowing altogether; and Croft, swallowing with perfect ease the bitter pill, took poor Lee's hand and wrung it warmly.

"Come, Mr. Lee," cried Mrs. West, no lover of scenes, "you really must be going. Just commandeer my car—my chauffeur knows—and I'll come back to town with Aunt Kate, later. She's fast asleep, poor dear, down in the car. Come, trot along! We'll see you at the hotel after the ship has sailed."

For an uncomfortable instant Lee seemed about to speak, but he did not. Instead he bowed, bit his quivering lip, and hurried out of the house.

"Ph-e-e-ew!" sighed the admiral, bringing tremendous pressure to bear on his temples to prevent the bursting of his skull.

"I'm so sorry, Admiral," said Mrs. West.

"Must have eaten something last night that didn't agree with me," groaned the admiral.

"And we can't eat our cake and still have it," commented Croft.

"Nor drink our wine and *not* have it—for days!" growled the admiral; "but

now, Croft, I'll die if I don't get some sleep. Do put me to bed somewhere."

Supporting the sufferer, Croft led him into the next room, signalling Mrs. West that he would send Kathy to her at once.

"Quick! Tell me, Kathy," cried Mrs. West when Kathy ran in, "is it all off?"

"Yes," answered Kathy grimly.

"For good?"

"For good."

"You lucky girl!" exclaimed Mrs. West joyously, but adding, seriously, when she saw Kathy's expression of dismay; "and please don't worry. Leave everything to me. Just file your suit—desertion, non-support, any old technicality will serve—and I'll see to it that Ran doesn't defend the suit, but lets you get your freedom by default. My! but you're lucky. No co-respondent's picture in the Sunday papers; no nasty scandal; none of those dreadful things that I went through each time."

"Yes—but—I mean—why should you go to all this trouble on my account?" asked Kathy, thoroughly at sea.

"Because—you precious little simp—I love him!"

With a bear's own hug and a peck at each flaming cheek she rushed out into the morning, leaving Kathy uncertain whether to laugh or cry. Before she could do either, she heard Croft come in behind her and turned to him. And the sun, at that moment, shone full into the room.

"Well?" he asked, smiling, as he turned out the lamp.

"What's to be done now?" she asked, sighing, as she seated herself.

He knit his brows, bowed his head in profound pensiveness, and then looked up eagerly and said: "I have it!—let's have breakfast!"

They had breakfast.



ATTAR OF ROSES

By Mordred Gillespie

SHE was rather commonplace. Her nose freckled in the summertime and her elbows in the sleeves of a lingerie waist were not pink but red. One thing about her, she had nice hair. But she kept it in a wad around her head and it bristled with a whole armory of hairpins—just ordinary black, ugly hairpins. All her girl friends said it was nice hair, though.

Her ankles, I grieve to say, were a bit large. She wore cotton stockings and black ties with large bows on them and rather stubby toes. Her figure wasn't very good. Oh, it wasn't dumpy or scrawny, but there wasn't anything really interesting about it.

She made an awful botch of flirting, you must admit that. When she tried to coo she mooed. When she tried to laugh lightly she squeaked. When she tried to laugh heartily she snorted. When you sat down on a bench beside

her in the moonlight she would attempt to undulate coyly away. But she really wriggled. You couldn't kiss her because she said that after a fellow once kissed a girl he had no respect for her. So that settled it.

She couldn't really talk about anything. All she could tell about was what a fine time she had in Pittsburgh the summer before and how nice all the fellows out there were. All you could do was play the Victrola, and sometimes she'd play the piano for you. But she really didn't play very well. She knew "The Rosary" and "Just A-wearyin' for You," and "I Hear You Calling Me," and Tosti's "Good-bye."

As I said before, she was rather commonplace.

Who was it? Why, that girl you were so madly in love with three years ago—I forget her name.



IMMORTALITY

DURING a lull in the uproar of Hell two voices were heard.

"My name," said one, "was Ludwig van Beethoven. I was no ordinary music-master. The Archduke Rudolph used to speak to me on the streets of Vienna."

"And mine," said the other, "was the Archduke Rudolph. I was no ordinary archduke. Ludwig van Beethoven dedicated a trio to me."



THERE are always two sound objections to a fat woman. One is that she is fat and the other is that she is sentimental.



THE man a woman marries is usually her second choice. The woman a man marries is often not his choice at all.

THE CRAZY MOON

AN ADVENTURE IN AUGUST LUNACY

By St. Clair O'Riley

IT is the opinion of none other than myself that everyone goes mad when the full of the August moon arrives. The dogs go mad and run until a policeman shoots them. Cats go mad and stop singing in the night, praise be! At least I can't remember hearing a cat on a moonlit August night, while in early summer they fairly make things hideous with their scuffings about the ash-pit and over the fences. Above all, men go mad. There is something in the sight of that big white cart wheel in the sky that unbalances the mentality and the splashing white flood of moonbeams is just alive with fairies and little people, who make a business of bewitching the more chuckleheaded and open minded of us.

It was an August time when my junior class held a picnic and I remember well that little Percy Graham, the grind, went mad and proposed to Eleanor Benton, a society queen, within the hearing of a dozen of us. And he got accepted! In the August moonlight my father, Patrick O'Riley that was, walked five miles at midnight to awaken Miss Kathleen O'Donnell and inform her that she was to become his wife. In the same moonlight they reached the father two hours later. One year after, to the day, they came to America where father got on the police force and into politics and finally became the best mayor this city ever had. And what was his last advice to me? "My boy, be careful under the influence of the August moon!"

Everyone of us goes mad, I tell you! In the country, you can't resist the thought of those long white roads and

big quiet fields, lying deceptive white before you and calling—calling—calling! In the city, you are crazy with the curiosity of it as it drifts down over the buildings, making a ghost house of each, with black eyes flirting at you. My madness began in the daylight of August first, but well I knew it was the rising of the full moon the night before which caused it. I had just completed a big deal in real estate and I felt it to be a thing for congratulations. St. Louis real estate had been at a standstill for a year, with none of us doing more than collecting rents. I had discovered the factory site, held an option—and that was daring madness—and come through with about four thousand profit.

The deal was over at noon and the money was safe in my bank, whereupon I naturally felt the risings of a jubilation in me. In some way I must fittingly commemorate the occasion. At the same time I noticed the dangerous unsettling of mind and heart that should have warned me to stay close in the company of respectable people and think only on solemn subjects. I did neither but went in search of diversion. First of my friends was Palmer Smith, whose office was opposite mine on the row.

"Palmer Smith," was my declaration, "I have just closed a pretty little deal. Let's go and have a joyful occasion somewhere!"

"Fine!" shouts Smith. "Take me to the ball game!"

At which the heart of me throbs with disappointment. A common, every-day, uninteresting ball game in which St.

Louis would probably be beaten anyhow—this to a man with the August madness upon him!

"Forget it!" I told him. "You have no ideas. I think I'll go back to my office and work."

I passed on up the street to the establishment of Lawrence Jenkins, which establishment consists of an office boy, a letter press and Lawrence himself, this being all that his father will furnish while the boy pretends to be a real estate broker between tennis games. I told Jenkins the reason of my visit.

"Wait until I get the car!" he laughs enthusiastically, "and we'll go out to Campbell's Grove and get tanked up!"

How disgusting! I shook Lawrence, although he was in love with his idea and later carried it out alone. Such was not for me. I wanted something more. Something unusual and wild. But I soon saw that I had exhausted the catalogue of summer amusements in those suggestions. My faith! I asked myself, was there no recreation or spot in a large red-hot city like St. Louis suitable for the enjoyment of a man with poetry in his soul and moon-madness in his brain?

I took my own car and went out and about, considering and introspecting, until pretty soon a ghost of an idea took me. So foolish it was at first that I laughed. 'Twas caused by my catching sight of a sign advertising the performance of "The Troubadour" at a summer theater. Troubadours, I reflected, were all dead; consequently the one who would be exhibited must be little more than a measly fake. What a pity they were all gone, I said to myself. We need more of those worthless devils nowadays—but then where would they sleep winter nights? And so I went on, forgetting it and recalling it, the idea growing and growing and growing until long after nightfall. Then of a sudden it got full hold of me.

Soon after I was out in the August moonlight, dressed in white panama trousers and shirtwaist, wearing a ridiculous old white boating hat with a feather in it, and by the powers that

be! carrying a guitar slung over my shoulders with white ribbons stolen from my cook's apron! For one night I had persuaded myself I was to be wild and mad, was to dance in the moonlight if I pleased or sing on the street if I pleased or pick a fight if I pleased. In the end I did all three, but I started out intending, more than anything else, to surprise the exclusive old streets in St. Louis's west end.

Now, there are people who say I made an immortal fool of myself at a lawn fête to which I wasn't invited, but I know very well, speaking theatrically, that I made a big hit, singing and joking for a company of lords and ladies which was being entertained in a duke's castle at Union avenue and Kingsbury place. There I picked up four moon-struck young minstrels who composed themselves into a quartette and followed me for some distance, teaching me entertaining songs and harmonizing with my guitar. Some say these were nothing but crazy college boys who were ready for anything but I know that's a lie. They were troubadours born and bred.

There are others who say that when I was alone again I disgraced myself by singing love songs for half an hour to an old lady who was the mother of four children and whose husband finally had to drive me away by calling the police. I know, however, that it was a princess who was imprisoned there and that I did not leave until a greasy old steward, who was in a lather of perspiration, threatened to call out the castle guards and have me beaten. As I went on with it I caught the spirit of the thing and at a second lawn party I kept them in a rear of laughter and applause. I had no idea I could be so funny. When I left I kissed the young ladies' hands and bade them all a good night, refusing to partake of refreshment which was offered me for the reason that I had many more souls to enliven and cheer before the night was ended.

Through it all, through every minute of it, the August moon rose high and

higher, the steady white light beating down upon me, bewildering my eyes and creeping over my brain like tide-water over sand.

It was late in the evening that the exciting things began to happen. I had come along Kings highway, which was entrancing with its big churches and secret orders showing black and white, but which was disgusting for its modernity with automobiles. Every minute they came along full of laughing crowds which failed to see the poetry in me and cheered themselves by calling names. At the corner of Lindell boulevard an effusive gentleman tried to embrace me and asked if I was advertising the show at the summer theater, which so disgusted me that I turned right away from the broad highway and followed Lindell boulevard, stepping lightly to avoid crushing the ghosts of leaves and branches which wriggled solid black over the sidewalk.

There was a street of poetry and adventure for you! St. Louis is a sensible city. It might have built itself upon an island and had property values and a skyline but it refused, and wisely settled on a river bank. Then, when the river neighborhood got too congested with trade, it spread backward and, having the whole state of Missouri to spread in, took plenty of room. Lindell boulevard is designed differently from Riverside Drive and Fifth avenue, for there are restrictions and building lines. Every house is set a good fifty feet away from the sidewalk and there are no fences to mar the spread of lawns with little black shrubs upon them, which look like Eskimo houses in the moon glare. Trees grow in long lines on both sides of the walk.

Along this street I went, saying to myself that here to be sure was adventure for a tired troubadour. I was not wrong. Just when the silence of the street was getting noticeable, for most of the big houses were closed with nothing but black darkness inside, I saw ahead of me a stout man. He was standing square in the middle of the sidewalk and looking up and down the

street. When he glimpsed me in my white uniform, he stepped behind a tree. Suspicious conduct this, but I thought I had recognized a policeman and anyhow—what has a troubadour to fear? Striking up that most joyful song about "Old John Henry" who had a story to tell, I approached the mysterious man.

Six feet from the tree I bowed.

"Well, sir," I said, "what have you to fear from an honest troubadour that you ambush him like this?"

With that he came out and I saw he was in citizen's clothes with devil a bit of policeman about him.

"Troubadour is it?" he asks, "and what is a troubadour?"

"A man who plays a guitar and sings," I tells him, civil and courteous.

"So does a nigger," he growls, "but that you're not!"

"To tell the truth, sir!" I reply, "I'm not a troubadour either but simply a wild Irishman. There happened to me this day," I went on in my flowery poetical talk, "an event of most supreme importance and this is my way of celebrating. I let the joy in my heart cheer others."

"Was it a boy or a girl?" he asks.

"Neither," I told him, "but something more rare to human man. It was money and a lot of it I made."

"Have you any with you?" he interrogates.

"That I have not. It is inconsistent with the life of a troubadour to have money."

"And it is a cheap way to have pleasure!" says he. "What other reasons have ye to go serenading?"

"None at all," I informs him, "except that I feel foolish when the August moon arrives. I think it must be the moonlight!"

That hit him, I could see. He looked about us to where the trees of the park showed almost green in the clear light and groaned to himself.

"Ah, yes!" he remarks. "'Tis the moonlight to be sure. I hadn't thought of it! If you don't mind I'll walk with you a little way. Will you sing to me?"

"Sure, it's what I'm here for!" I took my guitar and tingled off a few changes. The song was old and it was Irish, so, although my voice was a little hoarse with the night's work, it touched him at once.

"That's wonderful!" he tells me when I am through. "Now do me a favor." He hesitates a moment and goes on. "Look down the street to the fourth house and tell me if ye see any sign of life about the place?"

"No, sir, I do not."

"That's all right then! The caretaker is away and I'm looking after the property. And now I must say good night as I'm chauffeur at this place to our right. I sleep in that garage back there. Good-bye, sir, and a fine time you've given me for the last short while."

"Good night!" I sings to him and I improvised a verse of elegant rhyme to fit the words while he walked up the drive. But for all his saying he was a chauffeur I saw he did not go into the garage. He walked around it, after peeking back to see if I was watching and then, when past it, vaulted a wire fence into the alley.

It was mysterious but none of my business so I went on until I came to the house he had spoken about. There was a wonderful, magnificent, home-like place for you! It was big and square with little iron balconies in front, a huge porch to each side and a grand sweeping drive passing to the left of it. Overgrown with vines the front was and the moon made each tendril stand out like it was drawn in black ink upon a Japanese screen. A world of grass blades grew before me, each standing separate and shiny with dew. The pleasure of that lawn and house made me caper off the sidewalk like a six-year old boy into a park. Soon I took my guitar and for sheer honor of the building I sung me a song.

"Oh, there once was a gay Spanish senor,

Who lived in his ancient Castillio,
He called it the Castle Tra-lillio,
In the valley of Valla-do-lee!"

It is a nonsensical song with no sort of a salute to a house in it. There are more than fifteen stanzas, but each of them I sang, telling in detail of how the Senor falls in love, marries and for a wedding present gives his bride the Castle. With a grand flourish I reached the last verse.

"But then in the matters of courso,
The wife she got a divorcio,
Now she owns the Castle Tra-lillio,
While he sleeps in the Valley-do-lee!"

Wonderful it was how I reached a note two octaves above my guitar at the finish! And then, to reward me, something bumped the ground at my feet. For a moment I was astounded beyond all thought, but upon looking I found it was a peach which had been thrown at me!

"Faith! and am I so bad as that?" I was asking myself, when I saw something fluttering upon the grass about half way from the house. I surmised it was a piece of paper which had been wrapped about the peach. When I picked it up I saw that it was just this, but instead of being a wrapper with "Ozark Favorite" printed inside and out, it was a bit of writing paper with scribbling thereon!

"Dearest Juan: I knew you would come. To the balcony at once! Maria!"

Did I put it in my pocket and look foolish and go home? Did I wake up and find it was all a wild dream? Did someone throw a pitcher of cold water on me? Of course not, none of them! How can such questions be asked when I have urged that the August madness was upon all the world? I went straight over that velvet lawn to one of the little iron balconies, behind which I now saw an open window. Spanish was she? Well, then, she should not be disappointed for I had traveled in Mexico and South America and therefore knew both the Spanish language and that which the Mexicans have revolutionized from it.

"Ah, señorita!" I says, "*estoy aquí! Que quieres tu?*"

It was bold and familiar that "tu" instead of "your grace" but was I, a troubadour, not to be allowed some license of language? It was a minute or more before an answer came, but it was a rapturous voice that spoke it.

"Oh, don't speak Spanish," a woman says, "my name is not really Maria!"

"And neither is mine Juan!"

"From the accent it might be Mike," she laughs.

"It's St. Clair if you would have it—St. Clair O'Riley, at your service with song and sword."

"I'll have the first, Mr. Troubadour. Sing to me!"

"Come upon the balcony then!"

"I can't. I have no fan to flirt with."

"You are doing surprising well without—come outside!"

"Maybe, Monsieur O'Riley—if you sing well!"

At that I sang beautifully. If there had been nightingales in St. Louis they would have expired with green envy. I sang soft and low so as not to attract further the attention of what neighbors might be in existence.

"That was nice," she informs me, when I had finished, "I'll now come out."

The woman stepped to the balcony, the floor of which was just at the level of my chin and she smiled down at me over the railing.

"Well," I says, "have ye no rope ladder? Or is this one of those modern castles built without even a fire-escape?"

"The idea of you asking that! I don't want you up here and besides you don't need a ladder to climb this."

Whereupon I slung my guitar behind me, grabbed hold of the iron work and was up beside her in a handshake. She was amazing! Her face was oval and cut better than an Italian sculpture of the softest chisel strokes. Her hair was not black, I could tell, but was of those rich between-brunette-and-blond shades and there was a mass of it. The eyes of her were big and of a light color,

something grayish-blue, I should say, and they had the devilry in them of a million kittens. I told myself that those ancient troubadours knew something more than singing after all if this was a sample princess with her notes and peaches! Outside of me I acted my foolish part for I saw it pleased her.

"Now look at you!" I said. "You're not Spanish at all! You have gray eyes and brown hair!"

"For that matter," she returned, "you don't look much like a troubadour. You have red hair and eyes hazel as a tortoise shell cat's!"

"Phew!" I whistles. "Personalities are useless! This is a fine evening!"

"But rather warm!" she tells me.

"What would you expect in summer?" I asked her.

"Cool breezes and southern skies!" she answers.

"They don't go together in St. Louis."

"Troubadour," she asked me, "do you by any chance know an old college song about the evening and the moonlight which goes well with the guitar?"

"And better with a quartette," I amended, "but to be sure I know it."

"Sing it," she commands, "but sing softly. I have reasons that you should attract no attention."

It made an impression on her for the devilry faded from her eyes and when I was finished she sat staring off into the moonlight with a far-away look about her.

"Come back," I finally says, "come back to St. Louis and entertain your guest."

"No, you shall entertain me. Sing it again."

What with one thing and another we sat there a long time upon two little stools which she brought out. Many and many an old song she called for and always I obliged, whistling the melody if I forgot the words. Time and again she cautioned me to sing softly and make little noise. Now it doesn't take much to turn the brain of an Irishman. The lightest smile, the smallest word, will set us going beyond con-

trol. I was entranced from my first sight of her, so this proximity, together with the stage setting, soon became too much for my feeble intellect. After a while I ventured to reach out and capture a hand which was idling about just before me.

She pulled it away, smiling.

"I appreciate the compliment, my friend," she remarks, "but it's altogether too intimate you are."

She arose and stepped inside. In a moment a dim light was pervading a large apartment which I saw was a parlor. The light came from an electrolier upon a table and was scandalously dim.

"Come in," she told me. "It's more conventional."

I obeyed and inside I saw something which shocked me. Upon the floor in the middle of the room was a large trunk and beside it were two suitcases. In trunk, smaller articles, and upon floor and tables was a mass of exquisite silverware. I choked as I stared at it.

"What is the matter?" asked the lady.

"Oh, oh!" I said. "And is this what you were doing?"

"Yes," she replied, "what of it?"

"And you so different looking—I'd never have thought it!"

Whereat she giggled.

"Ah, I see you have guessed my secret," she opined.

At this a man came softly into the room with his arms full of the glittering stuff.

"This is the last load, thank goodness! Was it you rang the buzzer?"

He was a rat-faced, pimply scoundrel, wearing a chauffeur's cap and clothes.

"Yes," the woman tells him, "it was I who rang. We have a guest here and you must stay with us in the interests of conventionality!"

Then he catches sight of me by the window and his mouth opens excitedly.

"How did he get here? And what is it?" he asks.

"It is a troubadour," my brown-haired friend asserts.

"Where did he come from? How

did he get in?" he says, low and meanful.

"Through that window," she says, pointing.

The chauffeur man reached back toward his hip pocket.

"Wait, Jim," she commands, "keep your gun in your pocket. He's harmless."

I could see it but one way. Here was a pair—to be sure a strange and remarkable pair—engaged in robbing a house which had been left vacant for the summer. Many such robberies had filled our newspapers for days past. That they could be anything else scarcely entered my mind for what with its being past midnight, and no lights in the house, and the woman's cautions for less noise in my singing, it was hard to believe they had any right there. And as the man's hands dropped to his side, I thought in a hurry as to what was best to do. They were robbers or they belonged there—well I would soon find out which.

Consequently I made a quick step toward the man.

"You will give the gun to me," I says, "for safe keeping."

"Like hell!" says the man.

I jumped him and a pretty fight we had, during which my guitar was ruined entirely. We scrambled upon the floor and wrestled like two Armenian Greeks at a Labor Day picnic. Always the woman laughed excitedly and cautioned us to be careful of making a noise. "No noise, Jim!" she would say. "No noise if you love me, troubadour!" Which with the wildness of the moonlight and the damned foolishness of it all like to drove me distracted. But I got the gun and in a few minutes was standing before them both and keeping them covered. The chauffeur man was swearing and panting.

"Now!" I says, gulping.

"Then what?" asks the woman.

"I have a plan which is best for all of us," I told her.

"What is that?"

"You two may be robbers and you may belong here!" I began.

"You are not without some penetration," says the lady.

"As a total and neutral stranger, it is up to me to find out which," I went on, bowing to her.

"And who are you for that matter?" asked the chauffeur.

"That you shall soon see. My plan is this: I will call the police and when they come everything will be adjusted satisfactory to us."

"For the love of Mike!" groans the chauffeur.

"How will you call them?" asks the lady.

That stopped me for a moment, but soon I saw a pretty little telephone on a table in one corner of the room.

"That's easy—there's a 'phone," I smiled, and went to it.

Dragging up a little chair, I sat down and covered them with the gun. The woman began to choke with laughter.

"Oh, this is too good to be true," she chuckles.

"It's too true to be good," groans the chauffeur ominously.

I worked the hook on the telephone and waited. There was no waking the operator. For a second, oh, just a trifle of a second, I looked at the fool instrument, but it was an instant too long. For that dare-devil woman made just the quickest, most graceful move you can imagine and turned out the light.

It was stupid dark in the room, with only the reflection of the moonlight to show me their two black figures. The woman's voice came sweet and persuasive.

"That telephone is useless—you must know that!"

In truth I recognized the fact that it was dead as a seashell. I got nothing but roaring from the receiver. For a moment I felt numb as though my limbs were all tied to my chair, although my mind was working double time and seeing all kinds of foolish things. For example, I noticed a perfect reflection of the moon in the glass panes of the door to the balcony!

The chauffeur started toward me.

My tongue, thick as it was, managed to surprise me by talking.

"Don't move," it said, "I can see you both plain and I still have the gun."

"Would you shoot the woman who invited you here?" asks the lady.

"No," I replied, "but I can shoot a chauffeur with no qualms of conscience at all, at all."

They both stopped and then I saw I was all right.

"You weren't quick enough, Jim!" the woman says.

"Damn it! You scared me more than him with that light business!" he groans.

At which she laughs with a sound like angels pouring the milk of human kindness into a crystal pitcher.

For a long time we stayed silent in the dark. By and by things blurred before me and shadows commenced jumping around, which worried my sensibilities a great deal.

"We must come to a finish of this," I said.

"What do you suggest?" asked the lady.

"Suppose you turn on that light?"

She went to the table and I heard her fumbling in the dark. The noise sounded strange for the house had been deathly silent for near half an hour. Of a sudden the electricity flashed up, causing me to blink. When the water was out of my eyes I found the woman with her right arm held out and Lord above me! she had a wicked looking little automatic gun in her hand. The drawer of the table was open and I knew in a minute what she had fumbled with while turning up the light.

"The honors are even!" she smiled.

"More than even," I told her, "for, lady burglar, you have a better weapon there than this in my hand."

She fairly shook with laughing. I kept as silent and dignified as possible.

"What are we to do?" she asked after a while. "Have a duel?"

"I suggest a compromise," was my answer. "Suppose now that you and Jim put the silver back where it belongs, that we then lock up the house and leave things as before. In this way

do all parties escape neutral and no harm is done to anyone."

She considered for a bit and then nodded.

"That is fair! Although, Mr. Troubadour, it is a fine haul you are robbing me of."

"Pshaw!" I protested. "What is silver to a lady like you? You could marry the man who owns it if you wished!"

"I never thought of that! Jim, carry it back."

Jim obeys directions, swearing low and thoughtfully.

"Lady," I said, "I'll trust to your word. Give it that you'll not threaten me with the gun and I'll help him."

"You have it!" she declares.

Reckless it was, foolhardy maybe, but I put my revolver in my pocket and went to work. Jim loaded me with silver and picked up an armful himself.

"It is no use," said the lady, "no use, I suppose, to tell you that I am mistress here and that we were packing this silver to take to a safe place?"

"At twelve o'clock midnight and after?" I asked.

"Go on with the replacement," she sighs.

She leads the way through a long hall, black as Egypt. As we walked I thought I heard a scuffling ahead of us, but paid little attention, thinking it might be one or other of the two people before me. Of a sudden she turned a switch and a room glared with light. By the polished table and straight-backed chairs I recognized the dining hall. Further I noticed that everything in the house was covered with white cloth, like it was stored for the summer. To my left from the doorway was a huge buffet, with two large doors open, showing empty shelves where the silver belonged. Jim knelt down and began to unload the stuff we were carrying.

I noticed a window open across the room. The others were all closed, with the shades pulled down.

"So that's how you got in, is it?" I asked.

The woman who was standing with her back to it, whirls about with a gasp, while Jim drops the silver and looks at it, too.

"Good Lord!" she cried, "did you do that, Jim?"

"No, ma'am!"

At this we all stood staring at the open window like so many dummies. Then a door creaked and a heavy voice said:

"Throw up your hands, all of you!"

From a swinging door that led to a pantry a stout man stepped out, carrying a huge Colt's gun. Jim put his arms up without a word while turning. The lady gave a startled cry and backed away from the fat man toward a little water table, her hands behind her. The big man had his eye on me.

"Put up your hands quick!"

"And drop the silver?" I asked.

"Put it on the table!"

Which commands being made civil and firm, I complied. The man pulled a handkerchief a little higher about his face. My faith! I thought, but there's at least one real burglar in this crowd.

"What's that in your pants' pocket?" he asked.

"A revolver," I said truthfully.

"Come here!"

I went. He stood close beside me and took it from the pocket. As I backed away toward the other two I remarked something familiar about him and laughed.

"A fine chauffeur you are!" I yawned, for he was the same who had ambushed me from behind a tree.

"And a fine troubadour yourself! I might have known that such a story was a lie but how could I tell you were after this same stuff!"

At which everyone looked suspiciously at everybody else. Were we all guilty or were none of us guilty? The fat man did not seem to worry a great deal as to that. We three were standing in line before him, while he kept the muzzle of that big, huge revolver traveling about over our persons.

"Well, sport!" he finally says, "I think I know you. You are Denver Mike, formerly in vaudeville, and now devoting your talents to auspicious and profitable robbery."

The lady and the chauffeur sidled away from me, scared.

"I'm not!" I told them.

"You are," he says, "and here's my proposition. What do you say to it? We will take these two and tie them up in the pantry. After which we grab that big bowl there and two or three other things that look best and make a get-away. Fifty-fifty between us. Are you on?"

"I'm no robber!" I groaned.

"You are!" he growls, "and you'll admit it or I'll crack you off! You're my old pal, Denver Mike, and with me you do this job!"

That was a pretty idea! The sweat came out on me and I backed full into the water table. I cursed the moonlight that put the guitar into my mind and I thought of my old father who had made as honest a living as was possible for a politician in the days when electric light and street car franchises were being granted to the highest bidder.

I looked at the lady and she took pity on me. Her eyes smiled back trustfully and she gave just the tiniest glance at the table behind me. It set me to thinking. She had backed up against it when this new man appeared and she had then held a gun. In a flash I understood her message.

"Are you on?" asked the fat man.

"Sure," I told him.

"We'll get busy then," he said. "You two!" addressing the lady and the chauffeur, "you walk over here!"

He pointed with his pistol to a spot behind him. As they walked past he turned and covered them.

"Now you!" he says over his shoulder. "You take strips of that cloth and tie their hands."

I felt over the table behind me and got the lady's gun which she had dropped behind a china ornament on the table. Forward I went briskly, coming

close behind the fat man where he stood pointing his weapon at the other two. In a second the muzzle of the devilish little automatic was at the back of his neck.

"And now drop your gun," I commanded, "and hold up your hands."

The most fearsome oath I have ever heard sworn was his verbal reply, but he raised his hands and I took the big gun from him. The others turned and faced me smiling. But I frowned at them.

"Now all of you," I said. "Stand across the room and face me. There shall be no more of this until the police come."

I went back toward the window, thinking carefully of what I might do. I had decided to call the police, but how was I to do it with three against me? Before I had gone far with a plan I saw something on the floor which nearly knocked the sense out of me.

"Saints alive!" I said. "Fat man, are you in the habit of robbing houses in your bare feet?"

For there in the dust of the hardwood floor were footprints, bare footprints! They were all about the room. The lady began to laugh again.

"Mystery upon mystery, my poor troubadour!" she says.

And then I pointed to something wet near the swinging door. There, on the floor, was a big splatter of blood! All of them looked at it and turned pale. The woman, after a moment, gave a sort of scream.

"Where is my sister, you big brute?" she demanded of the fat man. "What have you done to her?"

The fat man sat down upon a chair and put his head in his hands.

"In there!" He nodded toward the pantry.

The woman swayed toward him and she held out her hands anxiously. Her mouth spoke a word, although she made no sound. The tears were running down her cheeks.

"No!" growls the fat man, "she ain't even hurt. She came in here, just after I did, and I tied her up. We had a bit

of a scrap and her nose struck the door jamb. That's what brought the blood. Oh, what a fool I've gone and made of myself!"

The woman looks toward me, a most pleading light in her eyes.

"Of course," I said. "Go on and look after her."

The lady swung the door open and called "Patty!" in the most endearing tone. She stepped back with a scream!

"She isn't there!" the lady moaned.

"Damn you!" says the chauffeur to the fat man and he made a step towards him.

"Wait a bit! No violence yet!" I commanded.

The fat man got to his feet and looked into the pantry. I did, too. It was empty. The fat man's mouth fell open and he collapsed backward into his chair.

"I quit! I give up! The whole darned place is haunted with fools!"

At this moment I heard the noise of an automobile stopping at a nearby house. It brought hope to me and I conceived a plan at once to end the misery of us all by getting the police and neighbors to come.

"Wait a minute! I'll soon fix this!" I yelled, "now hands up! All of you!"

I backed rapidly toward the window. Before I could reach it a voice, silvery pure, rang out, nearly killing me with surprise.

"And you put yours up, too!"

There to my left, facing me through the opening of a double door, and supporting a quarter-inch big game rifle, was a girl! She was the other lady over again, only a trifle smaller and with a trifle more sunshine in her hair—also a few million more mad kittens dancing in her eyes. Her arms, which extended from a gorgeous pink kimono, were more plump than the other's. Her throat and cheeks were a more entrancing pink.

"Patty!" cried the older woman.

"Don't worry, sister! It'll all be over in a minute!" laughs the younger. "That fat thief thought he had me tied

in the pantry but I got away and when I heard the others I sneaked upstairs and got brother John's rifle."

"Hurrah for you, you little dare-devil darling!" I said, but I resolved to go through with my plan, nevertheless. There were too many people with weapons about to suit me. The police must settle this matter.

"Who's a darling?" snapped the girl.

At this there was a noise in the hall, down which we had come and before I could wonder at it, a slim man with a mustache stepped into the doorway and pointed another gun at me!

"Hands up!" he yelled. "You are surrounded!"

I raised my hands in the air but craftily backed on toward the window. You see it was in my mind to jump out that window and to call help, while I watched the house from the outside. To divert their attention from my movements, I bawled a string of nonsense.

"My God!" I remember yelling, "is the house a hotel or a barracks? How many armed intruders are after this silver? I give up! I give up," and here I stood by the window, "I give up in all but one thing! I'm going to have the police here to settle this or die trying!"

And before they could think I whirled around and dove out the window, head first. I lit on my hands and knees, as both the rifle and the revolver were discharged through the opening above me. In an instant I was on my feet with my pistols pointed to the sky.

"Help! Police!" I yelled. "Help! Police!"

I worked the triggers as fast as I could, discharging a perfect fusillade into the air. I heard afterwards that a nervous old French caretaker, living two houses away, heard the noise and hid under his bed until daylight, shouting "Germans!" at half-minute intervals. I wasn't thinking of that then, however, for I started to run toward the street, yelling and shooting. I had gone half way and was laughing, joyful at the excitement and success of me when

two men jumped out of the shadow of the house. My heart stopped beating and my head simply went empty of brains. While I was wondering about them, they had me before and behind and, in less than a second, while I was still running and shooting, in my mind, they were sitting on me and taking away the guns.

"It's no use!" I said politely into the air, having turned my face to one side. "It's no use at all! My best I have tried to do and it was a good best, but what hope has one man against an army? Since when was Lindell boulevard besieged?"

One of the men—that which was most comfortable on my back, laughed and said:

"I always thought some of the family was bugs! Just listen to this, will you?"

"Bugs!" I said. "For the love of Mike! You'd be bugs, too, if you had spent half an hour in that house when it was alive with burglars, footprints and blood and you a simple honest real estate man!"

"Real estate, is it?" asked one. "Well, how do you like that your nose is in?"

"It would be fine," I told him, "if it had not been recently fertilized."

At this both laughed and a voice called from the window.

"Have you got him?"

"We've got something!"

"Well, bring it in!"

Which they did. The dining-room was almost crowded. There were the two women, the fat man, the chauffeur, the slim man with the mustache, there were three policemen and two men in plain clothes—being those who had sat upon me.

"What is this?" asks the man with the mustache, pointing at me. Which attracted my attention to him and, seeing him plainly for the first time, I recognized him and nearly jumped out of my skin with joy.

"You know me, sir," I said, "for, Mr. Lambert, I, myself, am none other than the same O'Riley who sold you a factory site this noon!"

"What on earth?" cried Mr. Lambert, "and so you are! Why do you rob my house?"

"I was not!"

"But you were!" cried the pretty girl.

"Oh, for the love of Heaven, I was not!" I groaned most humbly, struck by the thought that the others might all swear to a yarn against me. "Believe me, I'm not," I repeated as piteously as I could.

At which one of the policemen says, "Well, I'll be doomed!" and begins to laugh most violently. I looked at him and praise be! It was Micky Feehan! Micky Feehan was there! Micky Feehan, sergeant of the Twelfth District! No one can ever know the relief I felt in that moment.

"Micky," I yelled, "for the love of you! Rescue me and tell this insane crowd that I'm no burglar, that I'm not crazy and in short that I'm just a plain Irish fool, like yourself!"

"All of which is true!" affirms Micky, laughing.

"But it doesn't explain your being here!" said Lambert.

I looked beseechingly at the lady, and she nodded.

"I called him, David," she smiles. "I heard him passing with his guitar and something in the foolishness of it appealed to me. Besides I was afraid of those men that were said to have been hanging about the place and I thought he could help Jim in case of danger. He did, although he didn't know it, and came near getting shot by Patty for his pains."

"It was very unconventional!" frowns David.

"Of course! But I rang for James to chaperon us, didn't I, James? And besides there was something so out of the ordinary in his singing—and there was such pretty moonlight."

"There you have the true reason," I said.

"And he sings all of your old college songs, David!"

"Wait a minute!" says one of the men in citizen's clothes. "I am con-

fused. Now, I have gathered from the police station that this gentleman," pointing to the one with the mustache, "is Mr. David Lambert, who owns this house. He came to the city unexpectedly to-day with his wife. He heard of a number of robberies in the city and late this evening decided his silver was not safe while he was away. So, he comes here to the house, arranges to pack the silver, and then, knowing of no safe place to leave it, goes to the police station to get a force of men to come and take the silver and see it is kept at the station because he and Mrs. Lambert must leave on a fast mail at two-thirty this morning and can't wait till the safe deposit vaults open. He leaves his wife and the chauffeur here to get the silver ready. Then this gentleman comes along with his guitar and is called in to help, is that it?"

They all started to speak at once, but I stepped in and told my story right away, amid laughter from Micky Feehan. When I finished, the younger girl began.

"And I was upstairs and—"

"Who are you?" asked the plain-clothes man.

"She is Miss Patricia Fox, my sister. She is traveling with us," said Mrs. Lambert.

"Oh, yes!"

"I was upstairs," says Patricia, while we silenced two or three others. "And as it was so warm I thought—I thought I would take a bath—" she says defiantly, with a look that dared us to smile. "But I couldn't find any towels upstairs, so I put on my kimono and came down."

"Then the footprints are yours?" I asked.

"Yes!" she snapped, seating herself on a chair and curling her limbs up under her. "While I was in the linen closet back there I heard a noise in the dining-room and I thought it was James. I said, 'Go away James!' and someone answered 'All right!' I came out and someone grabbed me and we fought until he dragged me back in the pantry and tied my arms and feet with

the towels. Then I lay there and heard all sorts of cut-throats and burglars talking in the dining-room. I managed to escape from the towels and get brother John's gun. I called the police station on the upstairs 'phone and told them to hurry. When I saw the car coming I left the front door open and came back here to capture them with the gun."

"The bravest one of the night!" I interrupted. "And, Miss Patricia, if you do not scorn the inadequate introduction, I am going to come next winter when I can wear my evening clothes and you can change your kimono for something else and call upon you. Mr. Lambert will furnish you with references!"

"Indeed I will," he echoed, stroking his mustache. "And I hope you come. I like the wildness of you!"

"Never!" said the girl, "never would I dare to see him again!" But her eye had in it the look of a kitten which sees a spool on a bit of string. I had a sneaking notion that I was to be that spool.

"Then it was all a mistake!" laughs Mr. Lambert.

All a mistake! Here was my Spanish princess turned out a married woman and myself taken for nothing but an ordinary second-story man—to be rescued by a police sergeant! That's the luck of a modern troubadour! It only goes to show that you can live romance for a while but that you can't find it anywhere.

"What do you mean all a mistake!" objects the young plain-clothes man. "Who is that fat one?"

"He's the man who tied me up!" added Patricia.

We all looked at him where he sat on a chair with his head in his hands groaning.

"It's the worst job I ever done!" he sighs. "I was plain foolish. I walked on in without going around the house. I broke in a window with a mad Irishman singing on the front porch! I never knew enough to run when I stumbled on a girl! And now I'm caught by

a lot of bluecoats in full uniform!"

Micky went to him and stood him up. The man leaned on the sergeant limp as a rag. Micky reached over and pulled the handkerchief from him. With which the police, Micky included, began to laugh.

"Friends," choked Micky, "let me introduce 'Fatty' Maginn, one of the St. Louis detective force and one of the best among us too! Fatty's only failing is that he was once a burglar and every now and again he gets the fever to do a job so strong that he can't resist. I'm proud to say, however, that he only keeps the goods for a couple of weeks and then returns them to us. We encourage him—or rather tolerate him—because he's a wonderful detective when not playing crook, and besides—his exploits of returning stolen goods give the department great credit with the community! But, Fatty, why on

earth did you pick this place and this time of year. It's usually in the cold days of January that you work!"

"I don't know," muttered Maginn, "it came over me all at once, about seven o'clock this evening. I think it was the moonlight that urged me on. It fairly drove me crazy!"

"The moonlight," cried Mr. Lambert, "to be sure! I've felt it myself!"

"Haven't we all of us?" asked Mrs. Lambert.

Miss Patty scampered away to change her clothes. At the door she stopped and sent back into my eyes a smile—oh, the most deliciously wonderful bit of smile that has ever excited the heart of a man!

"Hurrah!" I said to myself. "Some day, young lady, I'm going to marry you!"

Now then, doesn't this prove all I said?



THE DEAD DREAM

By John Hall Wheelock

I HID a dream amid the sands of Time
And said, "Now will I go upon my way—
I shall be free henceforward from this time
And full of laughter all the livelong day."

But it came following like the midnight voice
Of my true love behind her lattice-bars,
And it came following like the silver voice
Of my dead childhood lost beyond the stars:

Like my dead self, so laughable, so sad,
So foolish and so lovable it rang—
That for sheer laughter I was very sad,
And took it back into my heart, and sang.



AT THE HIPPODROME

By Edna Wahler McCourt

THE three of them were in a sort of circus act.

My eye lingered on the clown, who was dressed like an Irish policeman, red-bearded, hugely nosed, round as a barrel,—a most ridiculous figure. But then I noticed his hands, and the beauty of them thrilled me as quiet music does. They were perfectly shaped,—slender, white, with tapering fingers.

And on the left one was a plain gold band that he kept toying with as his

eyes followed the dazzling little creature in white tights and silver. She was fawning in the arms of the Romanesque horseman,—now perched upon his shoulder,—now hanging on his heart,—now clinging to his neck,—as they galloped madly about the ring on one glorious black horse.

And I saw that the slender white hand of the foolish policeman was trembling like a wind-blown leaf.



IT NEVER COMES AGAIN

By Frederick Ladd

SAME old moon, shining, shining. Sea agleam. Shadows. His arm is around her waist. Muttered thunder in the heavens. A lightning flash or two. "Do you *know* that you love me?"

"Yes!"

"Why?"

"Who wouldn't?"

They seat themselves near the breakers.

"Isn't the ocean glorious?"

"Oh, passable."

"I don't believe you love me!"

"I do."

"Tell me about it."

"I do—that's all."

"Kiss me."

He does.

"How different this is."

"From what?"

"I don't know."

"Yes, you do."

"Well?"

"Well!"

"I'm tired."

"It's going to storm."

"What of it?"

"How cold you are!"

"I'm not."

"You are."

"Well—let's go back."

"Yes, let's. The baby will be frightened if it storms."

Which illustrates the extreme folly of believing that it lasts.

THE ELOPING HUSBAND

By Paul Hervey Fox

FREDDY CLOUSTON'S father had left him the incongruous legacy of a soap-factory and a romantic temperament. With that curious two-sidedness so many men of business seem to possess, Freddy assiduously cultivated soap and romance and yet never put too much faith in either—with one exception. This is the story of that exception.

He had been married for nearly a year before his wife found out what a brute he was. Then, one morning, he reverted to the habits of freer days and—came down to breakfast in a bathrobe! Agnes had said nothing at the time, but merely stared very hard at the coffee-urn in front of her. Thereafter the bathrobe at the breakfast-table became a hideous regularity. Freddy did not have to appear in his office to further the interests of soap till the afternoon, and he found a kind of voluptuous pleasure in passing half the morning unclad, while lazily smoking cigarettes and reading the newspapers.

Then one night shortly after, he went to a little supper with some comrades of his former condition, and failed to reach home till four the next morning. And though he denied it both at the time and later on, there is but small doubt that he wobbled, actually wobbled. . . .

No spirit can stand this sort of thing very long, and the upshot of it was that in one long, nasty scene Agnes launched imprecations against him upon a sea of tears. It was their first actual quarrel. Little spats that had only served to accentuate a very real affection—for they were fond of each other—had

been a-plenty; but never before had come extravagant denunciations and deliberate slashes at sensitive points.

"You—you coward!" she sobbed. "Why did I ever marry you? I used to be—to be happy."

And she would have none of his caresses and promises of speedy amendment when he tried to comfort her after the manner of men.

Still wearing the obnoxious bathrobe, Freddy went slowly upstairs to his study with his face marked by deep, silent suffering. In reality he was enjoying the situation immensely, but he would have knocked you down with a chair had you insinuated as much.

He paced back and forth across the room several times with his hands clasped behind his back. In the far recesses of his mind lurked a vague wish that his friends could see him at that moment, or that a good photographer could snap the pose. Then Freddy did an extraordinary thing. He sat down and attempted to immortalize his mood in a poem.

That it was a very bad poem goes without saying. That Freddy thought it was a masterpiece is equally fatuous. He resolved to delay not even a day before offering it to the world through the agency of some periodical. After some hesitation, he settled upon a certain woman's magazine for the submission of his mucilaginous work of art, looked up the address in the 'phone directory, and dispatched his poem thither that very afternoon.

Four days later a curious thing happened. In the interim Freddy's mood had gone the way of moods. He continued to wear his bathrobe and Agnes

continued to treat him with icy urbanity; but her attitude failed to engender any remonstrance, poetic or otherwise, in Freddy's breast. Then the fourth morning arrived.

No author is a hero to his postman, but it seemed as if Freddy was to begin his literary career by breaking that rule. In his mail that day was an envelope that bore in its left-hand corner the printed name of the magazine to which he had sent his poem. Remembering that he had enclosed his own stamped, self-addressed envelope with the manuscript, he slit the letter with a little stir of excitement. To his surprise out fluttered the poem itself and a brief, charmingly printed little paper assuring him that though his contribution was unavailable for present uses, the rejection did not imply that it lacked merit, but rather that . . .

Then he suddenly spotted the envelope, which he had addressed in his own writing, hiding demurely under the flap of an advertising circular. He tore it open hastily and discovered that it contained a similar rejection-slip and three typewritten sheets. There was no signature attached to the latter, but on the last page was appended the typed sentence: "If this is unavailable enclosed find stamps with which kindly return to Mrs. C., 786 Alton Ave., New York."

For a moment Freddy was perplexed, but the explanation dawned upon him the next instant. His manuscript and the mysterious Mrs. C.'s had been confused by some careless reader. Mrs. C.'s had been put into his self-addressed folder by mistake, and then with the stamps which she had enclosed his own work was returned to him in the magazine's envelope. He was still chuckling over such a curious circumstance when the breakfast gong sounded. Slipping into his offensive bathrobe, the graceless Freddy descended to the dining-room.

Agnes had been up and downstairs for nearly an hour, and her manner seemed to carry almost a touch of cynicism as she kissed her husband's un-

shaven cheek. Freddy was a believer in the tradition which countenances crankiness at breakfast, so he gulped his coffee in silence.

"I shall be out this morning, Frederick," Agnes remarked in her cool voice a little later.

Freddy was reminded of the days of his childhood when the full utterance of his first name always preluded his indictment for some infantile crime.

"Will you?" he answered abstractedly. "Where are you going, dear?"

"To see Mary Osborne."

"Oh, yes. Where does she live, anyway?" Freddy pursued in a flabby attempt to continue a conversation.

"Alton Avenue."

Freddy wondered dimly with what peculiar interest that address was invested. Where had he heard it recently that it rang in his ears so—so familiarly? He gave it up as a third roll begged his attention.

Having fed himself into a mood of good-humored complacency, he lit a cigarette and strolled upstairs. Before he picked up the newspaper, he returned to the matter of the misdirected manuscript. He read his own poem over first, and saw, with a distinct sensation of wonder, that it was abominable. Then he took up the typewritten article. It is regrettable to state that Freddy was not a gentleman but a human being, and that he began to read quite calmly what was not intended for his eyes. The article was entitled: *When Marriage Is a Tragedy. By a Woman.*

"A human document, by thunder!" ejaculated Freddy with a grin, and he plunged into the opening paragraph.

The writer, in crisp, quiet sentences, briefly put forth the disillusionment of her own mating. She was married, she said, to a man with whom life was going to prove more impossible with each month that went on. He was not unkindly, or selfish, or even lacking in the necessary sense of humour, but he was a sloven, he was degenerating rapidly, and worst of all, his every act and word somehow jarred terribly upon her

nerves. She contrasted her dream of marital happiness with the sardonic actuality. And tragedy, she pointed out, was compounded of irony rather than blood. . . . Freddy saw clearly that at least this was no hysterical female whose anguish consisted chiefly in her own shrieks. She sounded, too, like a pretty woman. Somehow a homely woman couldn't have. . . .

Then he turned the page and gave a little grunt of amazement. An odd suspicion mounted into his brain. This was what he read:

"My husband is a manufacturer who is able to pass a good deal of his time at home. I am by nature sensitive to anything that is contradictory to neatness. Those who can fathom what that means will understand my wretchedness and loathing when I say that my husband passes a good portion of the day attired only in a dressing-gown; that in fact he makes no effort to dress till it is necessary for him to go out."

Had *Agnes* written this? Had their quarrel had similar results, causing him to compose a poem, and her to write a "human document"? He caught up the last page and glanced once more at the address.

"Mrs. C., 786 Alton Ave."

What did "C" stand for if not for Clouston? And as for Alton Avenue, that was where Agnes had said she was going that morning. To see if any mail had come, by George! But why had she been afraid to have the mail sent to her directly? He wouldn't have opened a private letter and she knew it. But perhaps she wasn't the author of the article after all. At any rate, the whole thing was—er—damnable perplexing!

He went back eagerly to where he had left off in his reading. From that point the writer went on to say that though she had not been married two years yet, her husband was beginning to drink heavily already. One night he had come in so intoxicated that he could hardly speak. Soon it would be impossible to stay with him, and it was at this juncture before the final crash

had come that her tragedy was most intense. . . .

"Great guns!" ejaculated Freddy, "that can't be Agnes!" He took a drink once in a while, he reflected, but as for pouring it down in quantities—! But, on the other hand, smarting under the irritation of that quarrel, might not Agnes have exaggerated matters in a silently vindictive fashion? Certainly *he* had done so in his poem. Or again, perhaps her story had seemed a trifle lame on paper, and she had embellished it for the sake of a possible publication. He *had* come in once with a wee bit of an edge, he remembered. And wasn't it a queer coincidence that the husband in the document was charged with drunkenness only once? He asked himself these and a thousand other questions, and in the end could answer none of them.

His first desire was to discover whether or no Agnes was responsible for the article. He was not dull enough to try to do so with a blunt inquiry.

He went down to his office and typed a letter that began, "My dear Mrs. C." He briefly explained how he had come by "her touching little fact-story," apologized for reading it, and then begged to express his sympathy for her situation. He would not set down his name, but she might rely on him as a friend. Could he do nothing to help her? Then with the typewriter he printed the letter "F" as a signature, and added the address of his friend, Bob Stokes.

As soon as he had mailed the letter with the manuscript enclosed he called up Stokes on the 'phone.

"Bob," said Freddy. "If any mail comes to your place marked 'F,' don't open it, because it'll be for me. And don't forward it to my home, but send it on here to the office."

"You gay old sport," responded Mr. Stokes jocularly, "what are you trying to get away with anyway?"

"Nothing. I swear that—"

"Well, then, who the deuce is writing to you as 'Mr. F', eh? Answer me that!"

"My wife is."

Freddy cut short a roar of incredulous mirth by slamming the receiver indignantly down on the hook.

He stayed in the office that afternoon long past his usual hour, killing time with a magazine. Then he repaired to a bar, drank two rye highs, and went soberly home. Once inside, however, his soberness apparently left him. He gave an excellent imitation of a drunken man, and helped it out by putting into circulation considerable amounts of whiskey-freighted breath. The terror in Agnes' eyes as he swayed unsteadily at the dinner table almost caused Freddy to change his mind and blurt out the flat truth. But he stuck to his part in spite of the fact that he saw the tears welling up in her eyes.

The next two days seemed too horrible for a detail in the working out of a practical joke. Agnes treated him with a contemptuous silence that maddened. Then on the day following, he found an envelope addressed to "Mr. F" awaiting him at the office, where it had been forwarded by Bob Stokes. He opened it nervously.

It was a typed letter in which the writer thanked him for his note, and regretted that she must thank him anonymously. His sympathy, she said, gave her the courage to continue the fight. And she was the more grateful for his offer of help—despite the fact that she couldn't avail herself of it—in that it came at a crucial moment. Her husband had come home intoxicated once more. . . .

Freddy read no further just then. So it *was* Agnes! To think that she believed him as black as all that! What the dickens should he do? He was aware that were he to explain abruptly that he was her unknown correspondent, he would give her pride a mortal hurt.

As he sat there above the busy street, his chin resting in his hand, a vague idea suddenly took shape. Then he jumped to his feet, laughing like a boy. A glow of excitement coursed through him. For it had occurred to him that

the opportunity for the most whimsical situation of his life had arrived. Soap was quite forgotten, and the foreground was dominated by the plumed figure of Romance.

His plan was briefly this: In his character of an unknown correspondent he would write to his wife, assuring her that he was ready to offer his help at any time she might need it, and bidding her keep up her courage. Meanwhile he would pretend drunkenness in his home and employ every means within his power to destroy Agnes' good opinion of him. Finally when he was ready for his vacation, he would write to her as "Mr. F", beg her to fly with him, and then, at the last moment, reveal himself as the mysterious writer and take her upon a second honeymoon! If he played each part with the care it demanded, he had little doubt that his scheme would succeed. The idea of making himself repulsive to her was swallowed up by the more alluring and certainly more unusual one of being the first man to abduct his own wife.

He began promptly that evening by again pretending drunkenness. The next morning he wrote and mailed a letter that fitted accurately his other rôle.

It is hardly necessary to go into detail concerning the happenings of the next two months. Freddy quarreled so often with Agnes and heard himself called by such hard names that if he hadn't been able, by means of an imaginative mind, to picture his other correspondent as an entirely different woman, he probably couldn't have written the excellent letters he did. The answers he received made no mention of his extraordinary conduct. They merely said that the writer was bitterly unhappy and that she was praying for some door of escape.

Freddy was playing a dangerous game, but Freddy, unfortunately, was something of a fool. And his scheme was working so beautifully that he did not care to draw back from it now. Besides, though he felt himself a brute,

he consoled his conscience by reflecting how splendidly he was going to make it all up with Agnes in the end.

"Seems to me," he said to her one day, "you're makin' a lot of visits of late to that old maid friend of yours, Mary Osborne!"

Agnes drew herself up imperially. "If she can give me sympathy for the way in which you are treating me, there is every reason why I should go," she answered with a snap.

Freddy smiled to himself at the thought that it was he, himself, and not Mary Osborne, who was responsible for that sympathy.

The two months passed by. He had thrown himself so thoroughly into his part that he had done things at the mere thought of which he would formerly have shuddered. Then at last, he decided, the time was come to end everything and to explain that the problem play had been merely a farce in disguise.

In the part of correspondent, he wrote asking "Mrs. C." to leave her husband and fly with him, declaring that though he had never seen her, her letters had placed her vividly before his eyes. Wouldn't she trust him? Grinning as he wrote, he swore to treat her with all honour, to marry her as soon as a divorce could be granted. Then he went home to act out his other rôle. In this he was distinctly successful. Agnes locked herself up in her room where later he heard her, with a pang, weeping miserably.

The answer to his letter came almost directly. In desperation she at last consented to leave her husband, who was becoming absolutely unbearable. She hardly knew what she was doing, but she hoped God would forgive her, and that all things would be for the best.

His reply was to send a stateroom ticket for a vessel sailing to Bermuda that week. "I will be on board," he wrote. "The steamer leaves at seven in the evening. Go to this stateroom, where I will see you later."

The next day Agnes informed him in a quiet but determined voice that she

was planning a two weeks' trip to an aunt of hers in Boston. Freddy pretended to begrudge it to her, and then reluctantly made out a check, and threw in free of charge several needlessly cruel sneers. He fancied in these last hours of his folly that any extra insults he could add would make the moment of explanation the more joyous.

The day for which he was waiting in an almost feverish state of mind—for he could have continued his course no longer—came at last. He packed a single grip—a trunk which he had managed to sneak out of the house without Agnes seeing it was already on board.

Then, about half-past six, he made his way down to the pier and went on board ship. As the twilight slowly descended upon the dirty water-front he leaned upon the rail, smoking impatiently. He smiled to himself in anticipation of what was to happen so soon. He knew now, in this final moment, how perilously near to actual tragedy his scheme had been. Also, he realized that there was still an uncomfortable space to be bridged.

When the last call for the departure of visitors had sounded, Freddy made his way down the corridor to the stateroom he had engaged. He rapped on the door and in an assumed voice said: "It is I, your friend."

A frightened whisper bade him come in.

He swung open the door and entered. Then he stepped back with a little cry. A woman, a strange woman whom he had never seen before, stumbled forward, sobbing, and threw her arms about his neck.

"Oh, forgive me!" she wept, "but I—I thought you weren't coming, thought that someone must have been playing an inhuman trick on me all these terrible months with his letters of false sympathy."

As Freddy held her there, bewildered, and pale with horror, he heard the waters churning on the side and the faint storm of hails from the pier as the steamer swept out into the harbor.

FOUR NOTES

By William Drayham

§ 1

Friends and Enemies.—Let no man take his friends and enemies too seriously. One of the conclusions every man is bound to come to, reviewing his life in his old age, is that his enemies have done him much less good than he expected and his friends much less harm.

§ 2

Makers of History.—The world is always eager to do honor to the man who makes history, but in a given situation it is often difficult to determine the true maker's identity, and so a substitute gets his honor. It was not Grant who decided the Civil War, but the un-

known Confederate who shot Stonewall Jackson.

§ 3

Attention, Theologians!—The one unanswerable objection to Christianity is that the God it asks us to worship, if the descriptions of its official spokesmen are to be believed, is a vastly less venerable personage than Ludwig van Beethoven.

§ 4

The Public.—As for the great masses of the plain people, whose rectitude and acumen are so much lauded, they may be divided into two classes: those to whom thinking is painful, and those to whom it is impossible.



THE COWARD

By Mildred Ransom Cram

A KISS today is a grief tomorrow,
The morning's joy is the dark night's fear—
I keep my lips to spare me the sorrow,
I close my lids to the sun, my dear!



A MISOGYNIST is a man who has discovered that women understand him.



WHEN a man finds that most other people do the same things he does and with the same motives, he becomes a cynic.



A PLATITUDE is an epigram that has been used three times.

THE AFFAIR AT BROMPTON INN

By Elinor Maxwell

MRS. JIM BROMPTON had not lived in New York a long time, but her ascent to the stellar ranks had been swift and sure. She had married her prig of a husband for the cash to be acquired thereby, and everybody, including the husband, knew it, but she was so stunning-looking and so terribly clever that no one held that against her. Her house parties at Brompton Inn (which sounded like an English hostelry, but was really the Bromptons' country home, twenty miles from town) were never known to be what you'd call slow. Indeed, they had gained the reputation of being such hot affairs that you couldn't have *hired* a guest not to go to one, once he had got his bid. And as for ditching other engagements at the last minute in order to attend a blow-out out there—that was done without any qualms of conscience whatever!

Therefore, when my first invitation came, I accepted with alacrity and despatch—in fact, with such alacrity and despatch that I was rather ashamed of myself! Mrs. Brompton called me up one hot morning in August and said that she wanted twelve of us to motor out the next day, prepared to stay a week; that she hadn't had a guest in her house for three whole days, was passing away with boredom, and ready to cut friend-husband's throat, just by way of excitement.

I went out with Knox Montgomery in his racing car, so I didn't know until I got to Brompton Inn just who the other guests were to be. Knox and I were the first to arrive and Mrs. Jim received us on the huge south veran-

dah. It is a lovely, screened-in place, filled with comfortable wicker chairs, chintz-covered lounges, and swinging seats.

As soon as we had fallen into our chairs (it was a fearfully hot day), and the haughty duke of a butler had brought us something cold to drink, Mrs. Jim told us who else was expected, and Knox, who is a big, good-looking devil—as devils go—and I expressed our august opinions on each person as he or she was mentioned.

"Well," said Mrs. Jim, fanning herself with a big fan, the green of which just matched her smart kid slippers. "Persis Farrar is coming."

"Persis Farrar?" Knox repeated. "Why, she's only a flapper, isn't she?"

"Oh, yes," Mrs. Jim returned, "quite an infant, but she can play rags until there aren't any keys left on the piano, and her tennis equals that of any man I ever saw. Besides, she's rather tall for her age, and has divine brown eyes, and a good deal of horse-sense."

"So far, Katrine," Knox murmured, "you have not been cut out. I prefer to battle with some one, say, within three years of my own age, rather than a member of the preparatory class. In fact," he continued eloquently, "I don't much care for *anything* that's in the preparatory stage. I—"

"Sort of like a verse I know," Mrs. Jim interrupted laughingly. "Listen:

"'Darling,' he said in tender tones,
'I've never loved but thee.'
'Then we must part,' the maiden cried,
'No amateurs for me!'"

"Exactly!" Knox returned, helping himself to another mint julep that the

English peer had just brought. "Them's my sentiments. Who's the next damsel on the list?"

"A darling of an English girl," Mrs. Jim replied, "Hylda Alexander. She's a pretty thing and speaks with the most adorable accent. I thought it would be fun for her to come this week because she's fearfully lonesome. Her husband's out of town—"

"Husband!" groaned Knox.

"Certainly," Mrs. Jim returned coldly. "Can't a woman be interesting even if she has a husband?" Then, turning to me, as if to exclude Knox from the conversation, "Ritter Mooney's coming, Katrine."

"Rather good-looking," I commented, "and literary. Lead on, Macduff!"

"Leon Mitchell."

"Oh, peachy!" I exclaimed. "Leon of the wicked eyes and the nimble legs! He can make any old cow of a girl think she dances so well that she's fit for Pavlova's ballet!"

Mrs. Jim examined the contents of a big box of Page and Shaw's and selected a luscious-looking caramel before she went on.

"That old sweet Tevis Langdon will be here," she said.

"Tevis!" Knox echoed joyfully. "Dear old Tevis with her rosy cheeks and her verses! You might call the verses rosy, too! Rosy, risqué and ripping. The three r's."

"Oh, rent a hall, Knox!" I interrupted rudely. "Mrs. Jim is making this speech—not you. Who's next on the program, Mrs. Jim?"

She turned a dimpling face to Knox.

"Knox, honey," she said soothingly, "you just babble on as much as you want!" Then to me, "Gerold McFarland, Katrine."

"Gerold McFarland!" I exclaimed, just a trifle too enthusiastically. "Thirty-five years old; catch of the season for the last ten seasons; money to burn—slews of it—hunks of it—gaubs of it—but no girl has ever yet been asked to burn it for him; indifferent to the point of rudeness, blasé as a Chambers hero—and darned good-looking!"

Knox had been eyeing me disgustingly all the time I was counting off Gerold's good points.

"Who ought to rent a hall now, I'd like to know?" he inquired haughtily.

"Edith Chanler's coming," Mrs. Jim cut in. "I imagine she and Sheila Lonsdale will come out in Jim Neville's machine."

"Werry satisfactory," was Knox's comment. "Any more?"

"Yes," Mrs. Jim replied, "we are fourteen—that is, counting my husband, and I suppose, of course—"

"Oh, sure!" agreed Knox, with a magnanimous wave of his hand. "Count Jim in, by all means. It's his house, you know. But, who's the fourteenth? An expert mathematician, I can add only thirteen souls so far."

"Well," said Mrs. Jim, delving for another caramel, "the fourteenth is a perfectly splendid fellow Jim and I met on the *Olympic* last summer. He showed up last week and I immediately asked him out here. He lived here three or four years ago, I believe. Anthony Lonsdale's his name."

"Anthony Lonsdale!" Knox and I howled in the same voice.

"Why, yes," Mrs. Jim returned, frightened pale by the tone of our voices. "Why?"

"He's—Sheila—Lonsdale's—divorced husband!" Knox and I shrieked in chorus.

"Oh, Lordy!" Mrs. Jim cried, wringing her hands. "Oh, Lordy, Lordy, Lordy! What shall I do? I never *dreamt* of such a thing! I knew, of course, Sheila had been married, somewhere back in the dark ages, but it never dawned on me for an instant that *Anthony* might have been the husband. Of course, I thought it was a coincidence that I should have two Lonsdales in the same house party, but, then—oh, Lordy, Lordy!"

Knox lit a cigarette.

"Well," he said in a calm voice, "it's too late now to do anything about it. Two machines have just turned in the gate and are coming up the avenue, and a blue Mercedes is out there on

the public road, beating its way in." He had walked to the edge of the verandah and was gazing up the river road, which gleamed white in the sun.

Mrs. Jim giggled nervously.

"Knox," she said, "you remind me of Sister Ann in 'Bluebeard.'"

By this time, two of the machines had reached Brompton Inn, and the occupants began to alight, calling gay salutations to us on the verandah as they did so. Sheila Lonsdale, looking very fresh and smart and in white from top to toe, reached Mrs. Jim first. Then followed all the rest of the bunch except Leon Mitchell and Anthony Lonsdale. Sheila's ex-husband was evidently in the third car that Knox had spied skimming along the river road, and which was now turning up the avenue. There was so much chattering that not a soul knew the awful thing that was about to happen until Leon and Anthony stepped through the French window from the library. When they did appear, though, we all turned toward them, speechless, and with about as much intelligence written on our countenances as you'd expect to find on the faces of so many Swiss waiters.

None of us had seen Anthony since his divorce three years before. He had been travelling all the time since then, hunting in Africa, mining in South America, ranching in Oregon. He had always been a good-looking man, but now, as he stepped through the window, and I saw him for the first time since his return home, I realized that his experiences of the last three years had made him even more attractive. He was much thinner than when he had gone away, his skin was quite tanned, and his mouth had taken on firmer, finer lines.

Mrs. Jim stared at him idiotically for a moment and then went forward to meet him.

"My dear Mr. Lonsdale," she said, offering her hand, "I'm so glad to see you. Of course, you know all these people?"

Everyone sort of came out of the trance they were in then, and sur-

rounded Anthony. We were all just dying to see what Sheila would do, and finally, when everyone else had welcomed him home in voices that were probably just a little loud, she rose languidly from her wicker chair and held a slim, lovely hand out to her former lord and master.

"How do you do?" she said in cool, even tones.

"How do you do?" returned Anthony, bowing over her hand. "You are looking very well, Sheila."

She looked up at him with eyes as clear as limpid blue pools, and as their gazes met a dull red crept up under the tan of his cheek bones.

"I am very well, Anthony," Sheila said, "and you, too, appear to be quite fit."

The sigh of relief that went up when these little banalities were exchanged was almost audible. Everyone started talking at once. Mrs. Jim began to pour the tea that Baggs, the noble butler, had just brought, and Knox consumed six sandwiches in quick succession—more because of nervousness than of starvation.

"Iced or hot tea, Hylda?" Mrs. Jim inquired.

"Hot, Mrs. Jim," Hylda replied in that attractive English voice of hers. "Hot and *strong*. My word, but I need *some* sort of a stimulant!"

We danced on one of the verandahs that evening, notwithstanding the heat. Some people from the other country houses around Brompton Inn came in, and Sheila was, as usual, the belle. It's funny how a grass-widow can always rake in the beaux!

Mrs. Jim had to meet everyone at the door and tell them, for the love of St. Patrick, not to show any signs of intelligence when *Anthony* Lonsdale and *Sheila* Lonsdale were found to be in the same party.

Anthony devoted most of his evening to learning a new fox-trot from Persis Farrar. Knox flitted about with Hylda Alexander. He always thinks he's being very, very wicked, indeed, when he makes eyes at a married woman. She

was decidedly indifferent to his advances and that egged him on all the more. Edith Chanler and Tevis Langdon were both breaking their necks trying to attract the blasé Gerold McFarland. It's funny what fools women can make of themselves over a man with money.

Ritter Mooney got *me* aside for a stroll in the moonlit garden and a discussion of modern literature. Now, I know as much about any kind of literature as a Scotch collie does about the fourth dimension, and was bored to death. After a painful hour, I managed to get back to the dancers. Tevis and Edith had, evidently, let the desirable Gerold slip out of their clutches for the time being, for they were both dancing with men from one of the neighboring houses, and Gerold was out of the war-zone and nowhere to be seen.

At about half-past eleven, Hylda Alexander and I went to my lovely rose-and-white bedroom to powder our respective noses. As we reached the top of the wide stairway in the second-floor hall, the sound of voices from a balcony attracted our attention. Through the French window we could discern quite plainly a man and a woman bending toward each other in earnest conversation. The woman was Tevis Langdon's maid, a fresh-cheeked, fresh-eyed creature in a tight-fitting black silk dress. Sheer white collar and cuffs relieved the severity of the black and accentuated the vividness of the girl's coloring. The light shone in her face, and as Hylda and I glanced at her we could see that the eyes that were raised in such seriousness to the man were wide and black and that trouble and sorrow lurked in their depths. And the man, my friend, to whom those eyes were raised so seriously, so earnestly, was—Gerold McFarland!

So enthralled were they in their conversation that they did not hear or see Hylda and me. When we had got safely to my room I closed the door and turned on Hylda. "Well, what *do* you

know about that?" I demanded breathlessly.

Hylda sat down before the white-enameled dressing table and calmly applied a powder-puff to her nose.

"My dear," she said, "that's nothing unusual! You can't always account for tastes, y'know. Besides, Anne is a very *attractive* maid."

I began rummaging through the dressing-table drawers for a tiny platinum and diamond vanity case someone had been nice enough to give me the Christmas before.

"But did you hear what they were talking about?" I demanded.

"*Did I?*" laughed Hylda. "Well, rather! That's what really impressed me. Instead of his saying, 'Give us a kiss, sweetheart,' or whatever that American expression is, I overheard this much—'If it be a Government *for* the people, *by* the people, and *of* the people—'"

"*Hylda!*" I interrupted, "I just simply can't find that vanity case Jim Embree gave me Christmas!"

I had gone through each drawer exactly six times, and now, exhausted, fell back on the bed.

"Oh, you'll find it tomorrow," she replied optimistically. "Come! Let's go downstairs again."

The balcony where Gerold and Tevis' maid had been conversing was deserted when we went into the hall, and we found Gerold helping Jim Brompton mix some drinks in the dining-room.

The next day was too fearfully hot to do anything but play bridge on the verandahs. The stakes were pretty high, and by noon Edith Chanler had lost sixty-three dollars. She was flushed and sullen at luncheon as a result of it.

They played progressive bridge—four hands around, and the high score moved. As the gods would have it, Sheila and Anthony Lonsdale were thrown together three different times as partners. In one round, they won forty-two dollars from Mrs. Jim and Gerold. In another they parted Tevis Langdon and Leon Mitchell from fifty-

six, and in the third, they got sixty-nine dollars away from Jim Brompton and Edith Chanler.

Anthony's blue eyes smiled across the table at Sheila after their third successful round together.

"You and I seem to be getting along beautifully together," he remarked.

Her limpid blue eyes returned his smile from under long lashes.

"We always did get along beautifully together—in bridge," she replied, and a dimple appeared in her soft cheek for the very fraction of a moment.

By evening we were all so sick of cards that when Mrs. Jim called a halt on the game and told us it was time to dress for dinner we stopped playing with pleasure.

I had hardly got to my room when Edith Chanler rushed madly in. She slammed the door behind her with a great crash.

"Katrine!" she began, wild-eyed and flushed. "My cluster-of-diamonds ring is gone! I left it on a little silver tray on my chiffonier when I went down to play cards this afternoon—and it has completely disappeared!" She went over to my dressing table and began looking for something. "Where's your cigarette case, Katrine? For heaven's sake, give me a smoke! I'm as nervous as I can be. Dick Schuyler gave me that ring when we were engaged two years ago, and I've always been very fond of it."

"Why didn't you give it back to him when you broke off the engagement?" I asked cattily. "You wouldn't have had to worry about it's being stolen, then!"

Edith flushed to the roots of her hair.

"Oh, now, don't get funny!" she admonished threateningly. "You're not such a prig as you make out! How about that diamond and platinum powder thing Jim Embree gave you last Christmas?"

"That," I said slowly, lighting a Pall Mall, "that disappeared from my room between eight and eleven last night."

"Katrine!" howled Edith. "You don't mean it! Well, what do you

think of that, anyhow? Do you know what my own private opinion is?" She sat down beside me on the bed and whispered in my ear. "Tevis Langdon is hard up. She, herself, told me that she spent all of her last month's allowance before the tenth of the month. Her room and mine adjoin, and she was upstairs a good half hour before Knox and I finished our game with Persis and Ritter Mooney. She had every chance—"

"Katrine!" came a voice from the corridor. "Katrine, I've got something to tell you! Let me in."

Edith and I jumped up guiltily as we recognized Tevis' voice. "Come in!" I cried, rushing to my dressing table and beginning to fool with my hair.

Tevis had evidently wrapped a negligé about her in great haste. As she opened the door and beheld Edith the color left her face, and she said, "Oh!" rather idiotically. Apparently the bit of news she had been so eager to tell me was not for Edith's ears, too, for she shut up like a clam. At least, she was clammish as far as any news was concerned. "Aren't you girls ever going to dress for dinner?" she asked after a little pause. She was walking up and down in front of the cheval mirror, her negligé open and flying. She was doing it just to be funny. Really, that girl has the knack of acting a perfect monkey when she is most worried about something. "Aren't I the little fairy?" she demanded. Then, holding her lacy petticoat to her knees, she examined her shapely silk-stockinged legs with head bent critically to one side.

"If all the trees had limbs like mine," she announced politely, "I'm sure the woods would be divine."

"Huh!" Edith grunted disgustedly, and rose from her chair. "I'm going to my room to dress."

The door had scarcely closed behind her when Tevis grabbed my arm. "That woman," she announced in a stentorian whisper, her eyes wide and staring, "that woman has stolen a sap-

phire and pearl bracelet from out of my jewel-box."

"Tevis!" I gasped, incredulous. These little Heaven-helps-those-who-help-themselves-parties were getting beyond *me*! "You're crazy, Tevis!" I exclaimed. "Why, that's impossible! Why should Edith steal? She has money to throw to the swans!"

"I don't care if she has!" Tevis gulped. "No one has ever yet had too much of anything. Besides, she's the only one who knows where my jewel-box is. She was in my room when Anne unpacked the things. Then, too, she's always admired that bracelet! She took it, I tell you! I'm not going to say anything about it for a while—I'm going to give her twenty-four hours to repent and put it back, and if, at the end of that time, she hasn't done so, I'm going to tell Mrs. Jim!" Then she caught sight of the little silver clock on my white writing-desk. "Oh, Lordy!" she exclaimed, "Look at the time! Dinner will be announced in about a minute, and I haven't even had my tub yet!" With a parting admonition not to dare "let on," she flew from the room.

Dumbfounded, bewildered, I sat down in the nearest chair. If Edith had Tevis' bracelet, and Tevis had Edith's ring, which one of them had my vanity-case?

I couldn't go to sleep that night to save my life. I lay in my bed till long past three, thinking, thinking, thinking of Tevis' bracelet, of Edith's ring, of my vanity-case—and how funny it was when Anthony Lonsdale had danced with Sheila that evening. Mrs. Jim had sent to town for a bunch of negro mandolin and guitar players, and we had danced from eight till one to the lively music they made. Once, when they started to play "Esmeralda," Anthony Lonsdale had left the group of men with whom he was talking and made straight for his ex-wife, who was sitting on the edge of the fountain in the garden with Knox Montgomery. She had on a fluffy, ruffy frock of pink organdy which only accentuated the

delicate sea-shell pink of her cheeks, and made her look about sixteen. We all watched Anthony with bated breath as he approached Sheila. We feared he was riding for a fall.

"Sheila," he said in a low, charming voice, "may I have the pleasure of this waltz?" Really, you could have heard a pin drop, so tense was the silence as we all pricked up our ears to hear her answer. She hesitated for a moment, and then looked up into Anthony's good-looking, sun-browned face. "Why, yes," she said at last, "you may," and placing the fingers of one slim hand lightly on his gray flannel sleeve, she nodded her dismissal to Knox. Then she and Anthony stepped to the wide verandah and started off on a waltz that was made divine by the gold of an August moon, the silvery splash of a fountain, and the sensuous strains of "Esmeralda." With happy abandon they danced through three encores, and then, when the musicians stopped, they strolled, breathless and laughing, into the rose-fragrant garden.

I thought of all this as I lay there in my bed. I thought, and I tossed, and I turned, and I thought—till suddenly I heard a sound in the hall, and with a bravery that I had never displayed before in all my life I leaped from my bed and cautiously opened the door. To my surprise, the electric lights were going at full blast, and, somewhat dazed by the sudden change from darkness to light, I stood in my doorway, blinking.

Then, suddenly and to my horror, the lights were extinguished. Simultaneously, a terrific crash of silver came from the hall below. Like a fool, I began screaming, and in an instant the lights came on again, almost every door along the wide upper corridor was opened, and people in all manner of *négligé* emerged from their rooms.

"There's someone downstairs!" I shrieked. "I heard some silver falling. I—" Then, to my embarrassment, I realized I didn't have anything on but a nightgown, and I quickly repaired to my room for a kimono and slippers.

"I heard that sound, too," shouted

Mrs. Jim, whose hair was done up in magic wavers, and who was miles removed from the vision of loveliness that she appears to be in the daytime. "Quick, Jim! Go downstairs! Ritter! Knox! Come quick! Gerold, you go, too!"

Jim, wearing rose-colored pajamas, ran back to his room for a gun.

"Oh, you fool!" wailed Mrs. Jim. "The idea of delaying! If you were a real man, you'd go down and fight with your fists!"

Anthony Lonsdale and Ritter had already started down the steps. We heard them switching on the lights.

"Good Lord!" yelled Ritter. "There are knives and forks and cream pitchers all over the floor!"

"And here's a cigarette case of mine," bellowed Knox, as he joined them (joined Anthony and Ritter, I mean—not the knives and forks).

With a mad rush, everyone started down the steps.

"There's been a burglar in the house," Jim Brompton said fiercely.

"Well, evidently!" Mrs. Jim returned freezingly. "What did you think there had been—a game of charades?"

"Oh, I say!" giggled Hylda Alexander. "This is great, y'know! Just like a novel! Mrs. Jim! Can't you lock the doors and have us all searched?"

"I think that would be a good idea," Tevis muttered, looking at Edith.

"I do, too," returned Edith, glowering at Tevis.

We were all on the first floor by this time, picking up spoons and oyster forks and butter-knives.

"This is simply ripping!" volunteered Hylda. "I haven't had such fun since I had the measles. My dear! That Mooney chap'll be writing a novel about it, I wager. What would be a good title, I wonder? How does this sound—'Who Dropped the Silver?'"

"Very poor, indeed!" Tevis returned, patronizingly. "I think 'The Boarding-House Mystery, or, Who Wept in the Soup?' is much better. Don't you, Katrina?"

But I never got to answer, for the

senses were knocked out of us all by every light on the lower floor suddenly going out. Pandemonium followed. Everyone rushed to and fro, hunting the switch—and then, *somebody kissed me!*

"Who did that?" I demanded, trying to look angry in the dark. Then Mrs. Jim found the switch and flashed the lights on. Anthony Lonsdale was standing at my side!

"Well, of all the high-school tricks," I began, eyeing him disgustingly.

"I beg your pardon," he laughed, his big, audacious mouth twitching with amusement. "I—made—a—mistake."

"A mistake?" I repeated haughtily. "That's worse and more of it! I can't see that there's anyone you *ought* to be kissing!"

At this moment wild shouts began to be wafted to us from the basement. Knox, Gerold and Jim Brompton were down there with one gun. "We've got a man down here," one of them yelled. "A regular, dyed-in-the-wool criminal!" Then, evidently speaking to the culprit, "Stop your whimpering, you fool! That won't get you anywhere! I'll blow your brains out if you weep another tear!" By this time the servants, in all stages of undress, had begun to appear. The only one who had apparently taken time to put much on was Tevis' maid. She wore the same tight-fitting black dress I had seen her in the evening before. Her smooth hair was topped by a tiny white maid's bonnet, and her collar and cuffs and little apron were, as usual, very sheer and very immaculate.

The servants grouped themselves on the stairway, wide-eyed and frightened, while Mrs. Jim and her guests—the men in pajamas and bathrobes, the women in nighties and kimonos—stood in the lower hall. After much swearing and threatening, Gerold, Knox, and Jim managed to get their quarry from the basement to the first floor. I could have died laughing when I saw him. It was too ridiculous that it should take three big men to bring such a little,

dried-up, unshaven, shrunken creature to cover. His eyes simply bulged out with fright.

As he appeared in the doorway that leads from the basement to the first-floor hall, Sims, the cook, let out a wild whoop. "Oh, me poor darlin'," she cried, pushing past the other servants on the steps, and throwing her arms about the little runt.

"Sims!" Mrs. Jim demanded, in a horrified voice. "Who is this man?"

Sims sobbed with great gusto some time before answering.

"And sure it's me dear little husband," she explained at last, "who walked all the way from Brooklyn for a bit of cash from me. I just tells him he could sleep in the basement overnight, Mrs. Brompton, and," growing very defiant, and still embracing the little man (they looked like that picture of Madame Le Brun and her child), "and I don't see as how it hurt nobody, nohow!"

"Well, it might not have hurt anybody," Mrs. Jim replied in scathing tones, "if he had been willing to remain in the basement, but it seems he wasn't. Look at this silver all over the floor!"

"Yes, Mrs. Jim," Tevis put in, "and he must have been here for several days. A bracelet of mine disappeared yesterday." She had evidently forgotten her suspicions of Edith!

"I agree with Tevis." I got in the conversation at this point. "The very day I arrived here, Mrs. Jim, a platinum and diamond vanity-case was stolen from my dressing table. I hadn't intended saying anything about it, but now that the thief is found—"

"And I," interrupted Edith, "have been robbed of a diamond ring."

"Great heavens!" cried Mrs. Jim, wringing her hands. "My guests have been robbed right under my nose, my—Sims! Take your arms from around that man! How do *we* know he's your husband?"

"Oh, Mrs. Brompton!" bellowed the outraged Sims. "Oscar and I have been married twenty years, and he's a good,

honest man. He just ain't got any ambition."

Persis giggled. "He's lost his ambish!" she explained soothingly.

"He needs more wim, wigor, and witality," interpolated Knox.

"Oh!" wailed Mrs. Jim, "how can you two stand there and jest when my house has just been robbed? Jim! Stop looking like an Indian cigar-sign and go and telephone the police."

"Oh, wait till morning," Jim returned lazily. "No use making 'em take a twenty-mile ride in the middle of the night, when the burglar in the case will keep till morning."

"It's pahst four now," Hylda Alexander offered in sepulchral tones.

At this moment Sims' husband, or whatever he was, found his voice. "I never took those things," he shrilled, still wrapped in Sims' embrace. "I was a-sleepin' just as innocent as a new-born babe down there in that basement, when suddenly I hears a door bein' unbarred. Say, Sims! Did you hear that? I hears a door bein' unbarred! They had to unlock that there door" (here he pointed to the door leading from the hall down the basement steps) —"they had to unlock that there door to get to me!"

Knox looked at Jim, and Jim looked at Knox. "We *did* have to unlock the door," Jim admitted in a low voice.

"Sure you did!" the little man squealed, at last breaking away from the portly Sims, and coming up to Jim. "Sure you did! And I can show you just where I was sleepin', and just how damphoolish it woulda been if I'd tried to get up here. Say, Mr. Brompton, come on an' look! Ah, have a heart, Mr. Brompton! Give a feller a chance. Come on—"

"Certainly," Jim said quietly, "I'll look."

Well, the little man led the way, and everyone, guests and servants, followed in a body. Within ten minutes, the little old boy had proved without a doubt that, with the door leading from the hall to the basement locked, it was utterly impossible for him to gain ad-

mittance to the first floor. Mystified, and still suspicious, we returned *en masse* to the main hall. Mrs. Jim and Persis were the first up, and as they reached the top step Mrs. Jim uttered a piercing scream. "My gold coffee-spoons!" she shrieked. "They're *gone*! They were lying here on this table with the rest of the forks and things! They're gone, I tell you! They were here when we all went downstairs, and now they're *gone*!"

"Oh, you're just nervous, Lela," Jim Brompton said, soothingly. "They are probably safe in the buffet drawer, or wherever you keep 'em—"

"Well, they're *not*," Ritter Mooney put in, "for I myself helped pick them from the pile of stuff we found on the floor when we came down. They had pearls inlaid in the handles, didn't they, Mrs. Jim, and they—"

"They certainly did," Mrs. Jim replied fiercely, "and they certainly were on that table when we all went down in the basement, and they're certainly gone now! Someone in this house is a thief! A search has got to be made. Jim! You and Knox may start with the servants—and then—"

A satirical voice from someone on the stairway interrupted her.

"That will not be at all necessary!"

With one accord our eyes turned in the direction from whence the voice came, and there, with a disdainful smile on her red lips, stood Tevis' maid.

"There is no use subjecting your servants to the humiliation of being searched," she continued in low, even tones, "for I am in possession of all that's missing! I took the spoons while you were all down in the basement, and I was, an hour or so ago, about to take to my room the silver that you found on the floor when unfortunately I heard a sound in the upper hall, and, like a fool, dropped the tray. It was I who took Miss Anstruther's vanity-case—and Miss Langdon's bracelet. It was I who took Miss Chanler's ring, and Mr. Montgomery's cigarette-case."

Breathless, dumbfounded, bewil-

dered, we listened to this calm confession, as Anne, cheeks flushed, stood on the steps above us. She was the coolest, calmest, most collected person you have ever seen.

"You are bound to find," she continued, "that I am, as you call it, the thief. My work has been very clumsy this time. Miss Langdon," she said, turning to Tevis, "I had never before been a lady's maid until I entered your employment, and I became one then merely in order to get a glimpse of the society world—of the idle, parasitic rich! I am, in fact, one of the editors of *The Battle Call*, the greatest socialistic paper in the world, and," very fiercely, "I not only write what I *think*, but I *practice* what I *preach*. That is why I have, without the slightest compunction, taken from you pampered, chocolate-eating, overfed women those few baubles. What is a diamond ring to a creature like Miss Chanler? She has any number of them. One less on her soft, pudgy hands won't hurt her, while the money that I can get on that very ring will feed and clothe a family in the tenements for half a year. Besides, that ring was given to her as an *engagement* ring, and she *should have given it back to the man when she broke off her engagement with him*!"

"You devil!" cried Edith, starting, red-faced and furious, toward the disdainful Anne.

"As for the bracelet I got from Miss Langdon's jewel-box," continued the unperturbed creature on the steps, "the price for which I can sell that bracelet is enough to give a young boy I know a year's training in Columbia University. He's lame and he can't work, but were his mind trained he could become one of the greatest writers of the day. The brains of all you gaping fools down there" (here she made a gesture that included impartially each and every one of us), "the brains of *all* of you, I tell you, *put together*, cannot equal that boy's mentality. Would you, I ask you, have the price of a mere bracelet—a bracelet, by the way, given to Miss Langdon by a certain *married*

man—would you have it keep from the world a second Ibsen?"

The color left Tevis' face. "How do you know—" she began.

"We of *The Battle Call*," replied Anne, in a smooth, oratorical voice, "make it our *business* to know—a great many things. Now, as for Miss Anstruther's vanity-case, it's a tiny round thing of platinum with fifteen diamonds encrusted in the lid." (She explained all this politely for the benefit of those who had never seen it, I suppose, and I, cringing in the corner, waited to hear what sweet thing she would have to say about me!) "Its minimum cost," she continued in a businesslike way, "must be three hundred dollars. Now, in my opinion, a man should go to hell for paying such an amount for a damned fool thing like a vanity-case!"

"Billy Sunday," Knox remarked in a whisper, "has *nothing* on our little Anne!"

"*Besides*," the girl went on, "Miss Anstruther should never have accepted such a costly gift from a man to whom she was not engaged. She was *working* him when she did it. However, you all know—I need not tell you—that the only reason that Miss Anstruther ever *tolerated* Mr. Embree was for what she *could get out of him*! Now, for the three hundred dollars that I can get from the vanity-case, thirty thin, emaciated, *dying* babies can be sent to a farm for the rest of the summer. They are from the dirtiest, hottest, rottenest part of the New York slums, and to give them fresh air and fresh milk and *life*, for the price of a vanity-case the size of a half dollar, seems to *me* to be worth while.

"I can make just as good use of Mrs. Brompton's pearl-inlaid coffee-spoons, which, like the aforementioned articles, also have a story attached to them. And Mr. Montgomery's cigarette-case might be thought of in connection with a girl from the Follies who liked him tremendously! In fact, there's not one of you down there about whom I could not tell something interesting—cocktail-drinking, cigarette-

smoking, auction-playing fools that you are! You gorge and booze, and booze and gorge, and you think it's *life*! You—"

"Anne," gulped Tevis, a handkerchief to her eyes, "you may keep that bracelet of mine and send the boy to college."

"And I was about to say," Edith cut in, her lower lip trembling, "that you couldn't *hire* me to take back that ring after what you've said about it keeping a family in food and clothes for such ages."

"And I am only too pleased to help those babies out," I said. "There's a bracelet, too, if you care—"

But I never got to a finish, for Mrs. Jim had rushed up the steps to where Anne stood and was shaking her by both hands.

"You're a perfect wonder," she gurgled. "Why, I'm crazy about you! I'm going right up to my room and make out a check to *The Battle Call*." Then, turning to the men, "Do you know, boys, I think it would be lovely if you'd each present Anne with a check."

Anthony Lonsdale spoke up first.

"I shall be delighted," he said. "It will be sort of—sort of—a wedding present, you know."

"Wedding present?" Persis repeated, puzzled, as were we all.

"Yes—wedding present," laughed Anthony, his blue eyes twinkling. "Sheila and I are to be married in St. Patrick's Chapel next Tuesday morning at nine o'clock. You are all invited."

Well, of course, everyone laughed and cried and talked all at once. Sheila was nearly kissed to death, and I know Anthony's hand must have ached for a week from the way the men shook it.

After things had calmed down a bit, Mrs. Jim began again on the campaign for money for this Anne girl. It was most peculiar how, in ten short minutes, she had buffaloeed us all. She had not only deliberately and cold-bloodedly robbed us, but she had also insulted us to our very faces, and here we were, eating out of her hand!

"I'll give five hundred to the—ah—emaciated babies," Knox volunteered.

"Well," said Ritter, looking too coy for words in his pale blue pajamas and black, padded robe, "I may be a starving but honest author, but I can donate three hundred to some hungry and undressed family."

Well, in turn each member of that house party came forward with some lucrative promise or other—that is, everyone but Gerold—Gerold, who had more money than everyone else put together.

"Well, Gerold?" Mrs. Jim inquired expectantly.

"Oh, I've already donated to Anne's funds," Gerold replied easily.

"You've already donated to Anne's funds?" Mrs. Jim repeated dumbfounded. "So you knew, all this time, of her—acquisitions?"

A dull red crept up under Gerold's cheek bones.

"Well, no, not exactly," he replied. "I didn't know she was—ah—going about things in the way she did, but," hastily, "I am thoroughly in sympathy with all that she has done. I knew all the time, of course, that she was a prominent member of the Socialist Society, and not really Tevis' maid. In fact, I have known Miss Cartwright for some time."

"Mr. McFarland," Anne Cartwright announced, "has just given *The Battle Call* fifty thousand dollars, and he expects to donate more in the future. In fact, most of his fortune is to be given to my charities."

"Ouch!" groaned Tevis.

"To be quite truthful," Gerold went on, "Miss Cartwright and I have found Socialism and its good works so congenial that we—ah—that we—ah—expect to be married soon. The remainder of our lives will be—"

"Well, I'll be damned!" moaned Knox.

And so were we all, for that matter! As for the din that followed this announcement, it was about ten times the size of that which came in the wake of Anthony's statement that he and Sheila

were going to make a second attempt at wedded bliss. Then, after a while, it dawned upon us that it was broad daylight, that we were all very much undressed, and that the servants were still in the hall with us! They had been sticking to us like brothers, and having the time of their lives. Sims and Oscar (the husband, you know) were hysterical with joy over being "not guilty." When Mrs. Jim came to she trotted Sims off to dress and get breakfast.

A few minutes later we all returned to our respective boudoirs, to dress for a six o'clock breakfast. It was an ungodly hour, but naturally everyone was too excited to think of going to bed.

"My dear!" I exclaimed, putting my arm around Persis' waist, as we went up the steps, "isn't this the most thrilling house party?"

"Yes," admitted Persis, "it is, but I'm fearfully disappointed about one thing. This is the third day out, and I haven't had a proposal yet!"

Gerold did not appear at breakfast. Someone immediately asked for him. Mrs. Jim looked sheepish. "He and that Cartwright girl have started to town in his roadster," she explained.

"Do you know," Knox said confidentially, helping himself to a piping-hot roll, "now that God's pure sunshine is again casting its rays on us, I'm beginning to see things in a different light from what I did at dawn, and it's my own great, beautiful opinion that Anne—what's-her-name has made a bunch of jackasses out of us all!"

"Do you know, Knox, old top," Ritter murmured, his eyes twinkling, "I'm beginning to think so, too! Say," turning to Mrs. Jim, "do you really think Gerold will marry her?"

"I certainly do," Mrs. Jim returned. "And, my dear, *we'll have to take her up!*"

"Take her up!" jeered Ritter. "Take her up! My dear Mrs. Jim! You don't think for a minute, do you, that she will *let* us take her up? Why, we are the dust beneath her feet!"

HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU, MANHATTAN!

By P. F. Hervey

"TO see and know the city," I said to my visiting country cousin, "you must first of all sense each of its distinct elements, and then blend them in your brain into one smooth whole. Do you understand?"

"Yep," said my country cousin.

"Furthermore," I continued, "it would be in very pretty taste, if you were to pledge each of those elements in some appropriate form of refreshment. Likewise each form should serve as a symbol of its particular toast. Do you understand?"

"Yep," said my country cousin, this time looking puzzled.

"Very well," I said conclusively, "then it is all settled. You have been in town two hours. Precisely at three o'clock in the morning, we shall put our scheme into operation."

"Say, man," he drawled in alarm, "what do you want to do things at that hour for?"

"The streets will be comparatively empty," I explained. "And your true worshipper dislikes a crowded temple."

I spent the next few hours in packing a small grip, while my country cousin went off to get some sleep as a preparation for the impending adventure.

At three o'clock I awoke him, and we took a taxi to Times Square. Once he questioned me concerning the bag I carried, but I held my tongue and returned merely a mysterious and inscrutable smile. Times Square when we reached it seemed forlorn and deserted. A few electric signs still flick-

ered, flinging on the air a misty radiance. Now and then a solitary motor jolted past. In our immediate vicinity were to be discovered only a few newsboys, a cab-starter, and two owlshly drunken actors, recounting triumphs to each other.

"This," I announced impressively to my country cousin, "is Broadway. It is a street that appreciates punch and surprise. It is a place of glitter and excess. Therefore—"

I opened my grip. Then I took out a flask, filled its metal cap, and exclaiming, "To Broadway!" offered it to him. He gulped it down.

"My!" he declared a moment after, blinking his eyes, "if that ain't the strongest ginger-ale! It's just like fire!"

"It does not happen to be ginger-ale," I answered, "but no matter. The essential thing is that you got both the punch and the surprise. We have unfortunately no time to pay Broadway its tribute of excess. Now for the next place." I turned towards our waiting taxi. . . .

In a few minutes we were standing on a street in Harlem.

"Look about you," I told my country cousin, "and perceive the abode of the respectable middle class. We are in the pet quarter of the *bourgeoisie*. All is flat, dreary, stale. . . . Now try this."

I offered him a partly filled drinking cup, murmuring, "To Harlem!" as I did so.

"Say what is this stuff?" he queried when he had finished. "It ain't half as good as that other you give me."

Whatever it be, it's the poorest sody-flavor I ever tasted."

"It is a flavor quite popular in these parts," I assured him. "It is called 'vermouth.' But come, we must make our way to another quarter."

The Bowery was our next venture. Near a dirty corner we halted our driver. I took my country cousin beneath the flare of a gas lamp.

"Here," I said, "you perceive a section of squalor and misery. It is a squalor, nevertheless, that adds the correct modifying touch, and a misery that tones down the gayety, and mellows the magnificence to a proper medium." Then, "Hold out your tongue, please," I added, and fumbled once again in the mysterious bag.

"The Bowery!" I cried, simultaneously squirting upon his tongue several drops of bitters from a fountain-pen filler.

He shivered. "Ugh!" he ejaculated. "Say, but that's nasty medicine! Why don't you give me more of that first stuff?"

"Not now," I told him. "Besides you will find the rest of our researches much pleasanter."

I ordered the chauffeur to drive us to upper Fifth Avenue. The great white dwellings, so silent and so grave in the early morning grayness, pleased my country cousin more than anything he had seen so far.

"Say, but this would tickle the Zanesville folks like pie!" he remarked with enthusiasm.

"Yes," I said, "it is very beautiful, but it is nothing else. Color, loveliness, fragrance, flavor, but in the end—unsatisfying!" With this I produced a single Maraschino cherry and offered it to him.

As he swallowed it, I declaimed: "To the health of Fifth Avenue!"

Then we got once more into our taxi, and sped down to the far section of the town noted for the number of its magazine offices.

"Don't you feel a certain chilliness in the air?" I asked my country cousin, as we got out for the final time.

"Yes," he said, "'pears to me I do. Like as if the atmosphere was—was—well, just cold."

I took out a spoon and scooped up some shining fragments from a bowl in the bottom of my grip.

"Rock candy!" exclaimed my country cousin, quite delighted. "I wonder if it's as good as the kind they sell at Perkins' Post Office."

Then as he put the contents of the spoon in his mouth, his face underwent a sudden change.

"Why!" he said indignantly, "it's only ice."

"Yes," I assented, "only ice." And I murmured softly: "To Editorial Row!"

I now dismissed the bewildered taxi-driver, and my country cousin and I turned towards the nearest subway station.

We boarded a train, and I led him at once to a rear platform, although there were plenty of seats.

"We have seen the town," I roared into his ear above the noise, "have seen the splendor and the gayety of it, the flatness and the falseness of it. But I have no doubt that is only a jumble in your mind, and that you do not possess one distinct impression for it all. We are now in the subway, which is often known as the tube, and which might appropriately be called the tumbler. Here, if anywhere, is the proper place to mix your several impressions into a single unit."

To the astonishment of an interested guard, I caught my country cousin by the shoulders and shook him with considerable violence.

"Say," he spluttered, breaking away at last, "what are you tryin' to do anyway?"

"My friend," I replied, fixing him firmly with my eye, "I am shaking up—a Manhattan cocktail!"



THE YEAR'S A-BLOOM

By Elizabeth Munn

THE year's a-bloom on California's coast. Purple lupine blossoms down the hills to the lips of an eager sea.

Through the sage, colored like a quail's wing, slow-stepping cattle find low pools left yet awhile by the slow drinking earth.

There where a cassock-hued mission crumbles hour by hour a Mexican boy rings the mottled bells and black-shawled women pass through the deep doors to worship, poppies in their hair.

Along the Camino Real a ghost of white dust lays a pale finger on the cheek of a wild rose, making it iridescent like a primrose in its last hour.

Black birds poise their shimmering ebony against the white bloom of the pear trees. New silver, like a dew, covers the olive groves.

The brown earth, upturned, breathes a fragrant breath upon the breast of the new season and yet another incense escapes from the salt sea.

Yellow mustard lies on the hills: red roses coerced to adobe walls bloom their hearts out: timid leaves tremble on the wide branching sycamores.

And from a high place in the cottonwood trees a dove looks out upon the world and mourns. . . .



MY SOUL

By Frederick Mitchell Munroe

I CAST out my soul to send it naked into the unknown;
Over deserts, burning and waterless,
Through tempests and every buffeting,
Through pain and pleasure, through wrestlings and peace;
To burning depths it sank, and then to heights winged upward;
Through fetid byways it sought indulgence;
It verged the cesspools of wickedness,
It burned, it wallowed, it writhed,
And anon with Saints sang praises:
Then it came back and knocked feebly at my door.
"Who are you"? I asked.
"Your soul," it replied.
"I'd quite forgotten I had one," I said, "Where have you been?"
"With you," it answered.



ALL men may be divided into two classes: those who are vain, and admit it—and liars.



THE best way to get what you ask for is to make it plain that you will probably take it anyway.

HOW TO KISS, AND WHEN

A LECTURE FOR MEN ONLY

By Patience Trask

OF certain forms of labial contact, miscalled kisses for want of an exact term, I shall not speak—or at most merely touch upon them, and that only for purposes of elimination, viz.:

Compulsory kissing of children by old maid aunts.

Mendacious salutations of women with women.

Perfunctory facial engagements of relatives.

Emotional osculations of men upon men, happily never in good odor in this land.

Extend the list to fit your own experience. This sort of thing is not kissing, but a slobbering attempt to simulate a certain feeling by employing the terms of an entirely different one. It is as bizarre and uncouth as the linguistically limited Tony's speech in Mr. Thomas' play, "Arizona,"—"God damn my soul to hell, I lofe you, Lena." It is champagne with pig's knuckles and sauerkraut, a symphony orchestra playing the "Black Hawk" waltz, Theodore Dreiser writing a Robert Chambers novel, Sarah Bernhardt in a drama by George H. Broadhurst. . . .

For the purposes of this instructive lecture a kiss shall be defined as the physical connection of two persons of opposite sexes, past the stage of adolescence, in which at least one of the parties makes use of his or her mouth. For the actions of children previous to this period of life are merely imitative, and of little interest even to themselves, and the absentee kiss which certain psychologists advocate belongs in the

same category as foodless meals, and so is unworthy of serious discussion by persons of normal appetites.

The first consideration, therefore, at what time should a young man embark upon his osculatory career, is easily answered. As soon as the barber who cuts his hair passes one hand caressingly over a smooth and slightly downy cheek, and says, with upward inflection, "Shave?" it is time for the lad to consider seriously the many problems of him who would be a proficient kisser. And woe to him who, glancing at the title of this dissertation, sneers—"How to kiss and when! Huh! Any time, all the time, and go as far as you can." He is a glutton, and his the fate of the hog, to gorge himself and be slaughtered, without ever tasting the pleasures of a well-ordered life. That was what Byron meant, doubtless describing his own experience, when he groaned, "But the tender bloom of heart is gone ere youth itself be past."

For the youngling is besieged on all sides, and for him the question of selecting the kisses is the paramount one. All women want to kiss him, so he be clean and of ordinary attractiveness. Girls of his own age regard it as their prerogative, and women past thirty look upon him, avidly, as their prey. Most young women who boast, at twenty, that they never have been kissed, are liars and the truth is not in them. They not only have been kissed, but they have gone out hunting for it, in all the serene unscrupulousness of their militant innocence. Of these the young man should beware, and not waste upon them his time and substance. They

will teach him nothing—it is the blind leading the blind. Let him rather permit himself to be made captive by widows of the various sorts, mature but not overripe, and be led by them through his first tottering steps in labial joy. Thus he will receive the benefits of both the experience of the lady herself and, indirectly, of him who has departed (horizontally or perpendicularly).

It may be the objection of the self-appointed guardians of youth that this is a somewhat heady brew for the tyro. Not so. For your widow is a canny person, and knows where to draw the line, while the youthful and inexperienced dalliers slosh around recklessly with emotional dynamite, and miss nine-tenths of the fun of the thing by gorging themselves. The widow, be she worthy the name, is an artist. She calls time when she knows the game is getting too strenuous, and, clever devil that she is, puts it up to the lad in some such terms as this: "You're such a dear, *good* boy," or "This is not right, not fair to you. You must find some nice girl of your own age." This, of course, results in an impassioned speech on the part of the nobly prevaricating youngster, which breaks the current, so that when the wily widow is willing to resume play it is necessary to start all over again. The value of such training as this cannot be overestimated.

But an end to this advice to young men, for it is so much wasted breath. None of them will take it, for youth always scorns the words of experience, each boy regarding himself as an exception to all other human beings, and believing that the things he feels never have been felt before. So he blunders along, and thinks he is the very devil of a fellow, because he is so successful in his quest for amatory experiences, when, as a matter of fact, he would be a moral giant if he succeeded in avoiding them.

Still knottier is the task of getting the true lover to take a sane view of things. Almost invariably he makes the irretrievable mistake of kissing the girl,

not once, but many times, before he has declared his undying affection. This places him at a tactical disadvantage the first time the girl rakes him with the cross-fire of that eternal question, "How many girls have you kissed before?" If he had only exercised ordinary self-control he would be able to straighten his spine, square his shoulders, look down into her liquid gaze, and lie like an officer and a gentleman, with every reason to demand unquestioning belief in his tale of celibacy. But as he kissed her when they were only friends, why should not she deduce that it has been his custom to kiss all his girl friends, as it doubtless has? It is a hard thing to explain away, and while she will, after an apparently furtive tear or two, forgive him for taking advantage of the fact that all girls must love him, the fact remains that he has been forgiven, and must be becomingly humble about it. Consider the difference if he had only waited until that tense moment when he drew her yielding form to his manly bosom, and proclaimed by yon star or flowing stream or ceaseless slop of surf that he loved but her. Then, as she turned her virgin lips upward with just the least suggestion of a pucker, he could have allowed himself to be seduced into osculation with no consequent betrayal of his lurid past. But you can't get them to look that far ahead. A pretty girl is made to be kissed—that is the philosophy of the youngling, and many a youth has been railroaded into matrimony because of his faith in this fallacy. A pretty girl is made, primarily, to be looked upon with suspicion. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, but all her paths are not peace; rather, her ways are devious and past finding out, and the indiscriminate kisser digs for his own feet pitfalls among them, wherein one day he will fall, and fall hard.

It is to the married man that I would address myself with more expectation of a sympathetic hearing. He has gone through the stages of which I have spoken, and will realize that he has been careless and unwise. But he is unable,

usually, to work out the solution of the problem for himself. The first mistake he makes is acquiescing in the custom of bestowing a kiss as he leaves the house in the morning, and another the moment he returns. These program kisses are deadly. In baseball parlance, he cannot put any stuff into them, and immediately is suspect. He began by placing the matutinal salute firmly and manfully upon the lips of his clinging bride, but within a month his lips have wandered off to one side, skirted the cheek, lingered a day or two on the brow, until at last she is lucky if it lands on her ear or the edge of her boudoir cap as he dashes past her in an attempt to make up the time he has lost through breakfast being fifteen minutes late. It's a bad business. A kiss which is scheduled is worth about as much as a bottle of beer uncorked last week. Besides, these morning and evening kisses are simply the wife's thermometer; she contributes nothing to them, but just stands there and, in effect, says: "Come on, now. Show me how ardent you are." And as soon as the inevitable happens, and the husband begins to lose interest in the one-sided game, not realizing what is at stake, the wife begins to take an inordinate and unprecedented interest in his stenographer. The married man who allows this kissing by the clock to become a part of the household routine is storing up trouble.

There is only one good rule for matrimonial osculation, and unless it is observed the happy home is doomed. If a wife feels something within her say that her happiness would be enhanced by a properly administered kiss, let her go up to the legal purveyor of these commodities, who has been licensed to deliver, and ask for one like a little lady. Or, if she thinks it would do her more good, let her sneak up behind him and get one for herself off the place where they grow. Likewise with the husband. George Bernard Shaw's remark that matrimony is popular because it combines the maximum of temptation with the maximum of opportunity is true only so far as it goes, and to be

complete requires the corollary that matrimony is frequently a failure because its unlimited opportunity for mutual enjoyment is seldom accompanied by mutual regard for psychological conditions. For while the joys of stolen kisses have been sung often, loudly, and more or less melodiously, I maintain that the solo kiss is a blank in love's lottery. To be kissed by a man who is not in the mood for it is about as thrilling as looking at a picture of an automobile and pretending you are riding in it. Husbands and wives, who have all the opportunity in the world for research work in this matter, which is both a science and an art, fall into the pitfall of promiscuity, and by pawing and mouthing each other without the slightest desire, but only the desire for the desire, drive themselves to the belief that love is dead, because the old forms of expression bring no results. Love is not dead at all, but simply suffocated in this messy atmosphere, and the secret of many a forbidden amour is that circumstances debar the parties thereto from frequent encounters.

As for that blissful period between the declaration of undying affection, and the hymeneal altar, that time of unbridled osculation, what words can express the tortures which the two endure because it is customary? Heretofore, for both of them, kisses have been surreptitious affairs, gathered here and there as opportunity offered, and of a double delight because the sensuous thrill is supplemented by the spirit of adventure. Either they have been poaching upon others' property, or they have been prospecting in new territory—the ecstasy of the pirate or of the explorer has been theirs. To settle down from this to the task of raising cabbages in one's own garden plot is a transition which, after the first glow of satisfaction in proprietorship has passed away, is fraught with perils of far-reaching character. If, when the lovers discover that each kiss does not bring the sensation of the sun, moon and planets all crashing together in a cosmic cataclysm of joy, they begin hunting

frantically for the lost clue, and gum their faces together in an hysterical pursuit thereof, refusing to recognize facts, one of two things is sure to transpire: (1) They will weary of the game, and nobly release each other from the engagement, although they may have been ideally suited to each other; (2) They will heave their way through life like heroic ploughmen, not realizing that the sweetness of companionship has been drowned in a tun of glucose.

Still, none but a misanthrope would claim that this is always the case. I myself, I may remark without boasting, have been kissed artistically in the course of various engagements, and know that it can be done, providing one has the self-restraint. For example, one of the men who has loved me had a way, extremely annoying at first, of kissing me on the hands, cheeks, forehead, and so on, studiously avoiding my lips, and ignoring all the innocent little things I would do to get him to plant his efforts where God intended. But I had a great deal of respect for his intelligence, and was fairly sure that he knew what he was

about. He did so know. After he had, seemingly, wasted several of our meetings in this philandering, he would, in a quiet moment, look into my eyes with a meaning smile, and of the kiss that followed I do not care to write. The trouble is that men who are such consummate artists as that seldom marry. In fact it would be, really, too much to ask of them. To permit one woman to monopolize such a rarity would be like selling the Library of Congress to a private individual, and closing it to the public.

I am not a pessimist concerning osculation; I believe the world is growing better than ever before; but so many men are blundering along with the idea that a kiss is a simple thing, while so many women are pining to have it done properly, that I offer these few suggestions, born partly from experience and partly from observation, not with any intention that they shall be regarded as containing all the wisdom available on the subject, but merely as a kindergarten study, satisfied if they but encourage my brothers to engage in serious thought upon its numerous ramifications.



A WIDOWER TAKES THE STAND

THE one deathless passion of every woman is to get someone married. If she's single, it's herself. If she's married, it's the woman her husband would probably marry if she were dead.

The worst man hesitates when choosing a mother for his children. And hesitating, he is lost.

How much happier a man would be if he could only marry his second wife first!



WHAT makes a man love a woman is that look of unconcealed admiration in her eyes.



THE WORSHIP OF SATAN

By Helen Woljeska

I

I dreamed . . .

Through a large, shining portal I entered
And stood in the vast rotunda.
Above me a blue vault expanded,
Studded with glimmering stars.
Around me stretched an immense space,
Veiled with luminous shadows—
Stretched to the far distant walls.

And in these walls I beheld
Three huge, imposing, deep niches:
One I saw straight before me,
One to my right, to my left one.
Wide marble steps proudly were leading
To each of these wonderful niches.
In each rose sublimely an altar,
Before each a worshipping priest.

The altar at my left side
Was built of rough heron greystone.
It was bare and stern and somber
And the lights were veiled with black.
The priest who worshipped before it
Was an old man, bloodless and wrinkled,
He was clad in ragged sackcloth
And his head with ashes was strewn.

The altar in the center
Was built of glittering red gold.
It was covered with riches and jewels
And the lights glowed in oddly shaped globes.
The priest who worshipped before it
Was a man, middle aged and portly,
He wore garments of deep flaming purple
From his béret swept gorgeous plumes.

The altar at my right side
Was built of snow white marble.
It was strewn with fruits and flowers
And the lights flamed bright and free.

The priest who worshipped before it
Was a youth, beautiful and slender,
He wore no robe nor mantle
And his brow with roses was wreathed.

II

And through the large, shining portal
The masses of people were streaming.
And I saw them stand undecided—
And look at the altars—and chose.

And behold how they crowd the gold altar!
Only few flocking to the grey mysteries.
To the white altar no one at all. . . .

III

And through the large, shining portal
A woman, alone, now walked in.
And I saw her stand undecided—
And look at the altars—and pause.

"Why do you not choose?" I asked her.
"I know not whom they worship," she answered.
"Why do you not follow the masses—
Why do you not go as they lead. . . ."
But the woman had turned herself from me.

And I saw her step to the grey altar.

And she asked the priest: "What may your creed be?"

And he said:
"Crucify your flesh and crush down your desires,
Confess nature sinful and vile and depraved.
And perchance after death you shall not be unworthy
With pure angels to chant all through eternity!"

She asked:
"You worship Superstition?"
"We worship God!"
He thundered.
And the woman turned away.

And I saw her step to the gold altar.

And she asked the priest: "What may your creed be?"

And he said:
"Bow your head before custom, honor those who hold power,
Scheme wisely, press keenly, relentlessly on.
And your life shall be crowned with success and with honor,
And riches and pleasures your portion shall be!"

She asked:
 "You worship the World?"
 "We worship Reason—"
 He said, with a shrug.
 And the woman turned away.

And I saw her step to the white altar.

And she asked the priest: "What may your creed be?"

And he said:
 "Love truth and love loving, love joy and love sorrow,
 Free, proud and courageous, dare all nature dares.
 Though the church will condemn you, society shun you—
 You shall live as a king, you shall die as a god!"

She asked:
 "You worship Truth?"
 "We worship Satan . . ."
 He said—and he smiled.
 The woman smiled too.
 And she knelt before the white altar. . . .

I dreamed.



LA FEMME AU CHAT

HER small black cat had run away—the child seemed inconsolable.
 "Don't cry, darling," said the mother. "He is a bad kitten to run away
 and cause you all this sorrow. He has no love for you! He is not worth
 mourning for! Come, sweet, think of something else. . . ."

But the child raised her head defiantly, and the young, rosy face suddenly
 looked strangely like the pale, worn one. "I do not care if he is good or bad!
 I love him—and I want him!"

A deep flush spread over the mother's thin cheek, and she seized the child
 in her arms. "You are the true daughter of your mother . . ." she whispered.



THE man who proposes three times to the same woman deserves to be accepted
 the third time.

THOUGHTS IN CHURCH

By Randolph Bartlett

§ 1

WOMEN are unjustly accused of garbing themselves more completely for church than for the opera or for the seashore, because they are ashamed to display before God the charms which they so willingly reveal to men. The truth is that they have a keen sense of honor, and would regard it as unfair competition to require the dullest of God's manifestations to bid for attention against shapely limbs and shoulders; whereas they feel that when God speaks in sunshine and sea, or music and motion, He can take care of Himself.

§ 2

Doubtless the strangest phenomenon of modern life is the payment by wealthy men of large sums of money for the support of religious propaganda which, if put into general effect, would destroy the business enterprises by which this money was accumulated; in which, also, the donors of this money have neither a theoretical nor a practical belief; facts which they admit by employing only those ministers who have the faculty of concealing the dominant mythology and ethics beneath picturesque language.

§ 3

Theaters are built to be dark inside because of the desire to focus all light

upon the stage, since otherwise few plays would hold the attention of audiences; prisons are kept dark because of the desire to make the occupants feel humble and chastened; why are churches dark? . . . to benumb the minds of the audiences? . . . or to overawe them? . . . or what?

§ 4

Did you ever hear a sermon you thought would interest you if the preacher stood in a meadow where daisies were in bloom? . . . Yes? . . . Congratulations!

§ 5

If it is possible to think of Deity as being insulted by man, consider what must be the feeling of the Creator of a world of beauty upon contemplating the ordinary structure called a house of God! No man of good taste would consent to such architectural monstrosities for his own house, but they are good enough for purposes of devotion. Likewise, what must God think of the opinion in which He is held by the average unlovely man, who goes about proclaiming confidently that he has been created in the image and likeness of his Maker? If the human form be truly divine, why all the pains taken to cover it up completely with hideous garments?



WHEN a woman courts a man she is said to throw herself at his head. When she gets away with it he is said to throw himself at her feet.



IF women believed in their husbands they would be a good deal happier. And also a good deal more foolish.

YOU'RE SUCH A RESPECTABLE PERSON, MISS MORRISON

By Dorothy Kirchner Earle

CHARACTERS:

BRANVILLE NELSON
ARTHUR CORWIN
HESTER
MARGARET MORRISON
BUTLER

SCENE: *Mr. Nelson's house in London.*

TIME: *The Present.*

*Jenny kissed me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in.
Love, you thief, who like to get
Sweets upon your lips, put that in.
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad.
Say that health and wealth have missed me;
Say I'm growing old, but add
Jenny kissed me!*

—LEIGH HUNT.

THE scene is the library of a city house evidently belonging to wealthy people. There is a fireplace to the right in which is built an architecturally perfect fire, illumined by gas. There is a large, old-fashioned roller top desk which evinces the age and standing of the family. Beside it sits a small table with a typewriter on it. At intervals 'round the room are a large table with such literature on it as *The Review of Reviews* and *The Churchman*, in neat piles, and arm chairs looking rather warm but comfortable. The pictures on the wall are obviously respectable ancestors of the type that you would not have round if they were not, framed in heavy gold.

At the typewriter sits Miss Margaret Morrison, age, almost any old thing between twenty-eight and thirty odd. She's not pretty, but she certainly is not homely. You feel she might be almost either any minute. Her hair is rather nondescript, but her eyes are very dark, and she veils them most of the time with very thick white lids. Her mouth is too large, but her nose is really rather good, while her best feature is her hands, lovely hands, suggesting all sorts of delightful possibilities. Then you look at her and you're sorry, for her face has a typically respectable stenographer's expression, something between a lapdog that nobody has paid much attention to, an upper servant, and an early martyr. Can you picture her, gentlemen? She beats the typewriter, with swiftness, occasionally looking over at a manuscript which she is apparently copying. She writes for a few minutes in silence. Then enters Corwin.

Arthur Corwin is just the type of man you shouldn't like but always do, you ladies! He's about six feet in height, but he has an excellent figure. He's not particularly good looking, but he has an entrancing smile and his manner—why it's just the kind we all like best, though if we're clever, and some of us are, we know that nine chances to one it's only manner, and the tenth time we would be foolish if we took it too seriously. He's dressed in an exceedingly well fitted dark suit, and he carries his hat in his hand. He stands and looks at Margaret a moment. She does not notice his presence, but continues her writing. Corwin advances toward her, and his voice is really very nice indeed.

CORWIN—Hm. I beg your pardon, but I'm Mr. Nelson's nephew, Arthur Corwin, and he said I might ask you to do some work for me, if you have a half hour. Have you?

(*He smiles, and it's one of his best.*)

MISS MORRISON (*in a businesslike tone*)—Certainly. Do sit down at the desk. I have nothing pressing for Mr. Nelson at present, and can attend to your work at once.

(*Her voice is as stilted as her words.*)

CORWIN (*sitting down at the desk, one knee over the other, hands in pockets*)—Let me see, the fact is, Miss—Miss—

MISS MORRISON—Morrison.

CORWIN—You see, it's rather personal. (*Laughs.*) Well, the fact is, I am, or rather, I was, in love. (*With slight embarrassment.*) You've been there yourself, I'm certain. (*Engagingly.*) Of course, all women have.

(*Silence. Miss Morrison sits with pad in hand and pencil raised, her face calm, businesslike. Corwin looks at her inquiringly. Then his sense of humor and a love of excitement in even the seemingly calmest and most prosaic of situations asserts itself. He loves adventure, and life has taught him that every woman holds a possibility, more or less, of one. Not for nothing is he thirty-eight and charming.*)

CORWIN—All women fall in and out of love, don't they, Miss Morrison?

MISS MORRISON—I know very few women, Mr. Corwin. I attend to my work all day.

CORWIN—But surely you don't call the day all your life, Miss Morrison.

MISS MORRISON—I don't call it anything. Shall I take dictation by shorthand or on the typewriter? I can do it on the machine with plenty of speed. So, at any rate, my employer says.

CORWIN—I'm not an employer, Miss Morrison, so who knows what I shall say? Would you like to know?

MISS MORRISON—I am not particularly interested, sir.

CORWIN (*for she was certainly not good looking, and he knew—how could he help it?—that he was a fascinating man! Don't blame him, ladies; you have all told him so, and his likes, a thousand times*)—Very well, what are you interested in Miss—(*with obvious hesitation*) — Miss — Morris — Morrison?

MISS MORRISON—My work, sir. Are you ready?

CORWIN (*whimsically*)—Won't you talk to me a minute, please? The letters are confoundingly hard to write. Breaking my engagement changed all my legal affairs, and I've dozens of dull letters to write.

MISS MORRISON—Shouldn't we be getting at them, sir?

CORWIN—You know you'd oblige me awfully by dropping that "sir" for a moment or two and talking to me. I've had the very devil of a time, and somehow I'd like to talk to you. My uncle is a beastly old man when he's in a temper, don't you think?

(*Beware the man who throws himself on your sympathy! You're in a dangerous position, and especially when he has the faculty of earnestly desiring it!*)

MISS MORRISON—Mr. Nelson has never been angry with me, Mr. Corwin.

I've been very careful not to displease him. He told me the other day, at the end of my fifth year with him, that I had done my duty very well.

CORWIN—Do you always do your duty?

MISS MORRISON (*wearily*)—Generally, sir.

CORWIN (*with genuine sympathy*)—Poor dear!

MISS MORRISON (*for an instant startled, perhaps for the first time in ten years, though, of course, we don't know her age yet*)—Yes; it's dreadful, isn't it; but I can't help it.

CORWIN—Why, I can.

MISS MORRISON—I am a stenographer, sir, and (*with a little humorous twist*) your uncle's.

CORWIN—Some stenographers have jolly times.

MISS MORRISON—There are only two kinds of stenographer, good and bad, Mr. Corwin. That's life, anyway. I discovered it long ago. You have to choose; there are no half ways. You may think sometimes that you've chosen the between course, but you always find in the end that you've chosen one way or another affirmatively. (*Then with sudden recollection*): I beg your pardon, sir, I forgot myself.

CORWIN—Please forget yourself again. I really believe you're mistaken, though. Jove, if I had it put up to me suddenly in black and white—I wonder which I'd choose—I wonder!

MISS MORRISON (*quietly*)—Which-ever you chose, you'd regret it.

CORWIN (*with sudden interest*)—Have you regretted your choice much, poor dear?

(*He has the kind of voice which can take liberties of speech and not make them seem liberties at all, somehow. You've heard them; all of us have.*)

MISS MORRISON (*answering the understanding in his voice even more than in his words, speaks with sudden passion*)—Haven't I! Do you think it's fun to sit here day after day and work and work and be a mummy every day; a machine that smiles and says, "Yes, sir," and "No, sir," that is not human,

that is just (*with great scorn*), a most estimable young woman, so respectable and conscientious? Don't you suppose we often envy those others, with their pretty clothes and bright color, and beau—? (*Stops, frightened at what she's said; puts both hands to her face, and her voice is muffled when she speaks again.*) I beg your pardon. I think I'm crazy; I'm—(*with an attempt to return to her former manner*)—I'm very sorry, sir.

CORWIN—Damn the sir. There (*with a little humorous smile*), I'll have to apologize now, and I hate to. I'm sorry I swore, but really it's quite too much. You poor little kid, you poor little thing! Can't you play at all, ever? Don't you ever have just a little fun?

MISS MORRISON (*from behind her handkerchief, bitterly*)—Of a perfectly respectable sort. I go to a good concert and sit in the balcony in my best silk waist. I go on a ticket that Mr. Nelson gives me as a reward for a good girl. Do you call that fun?

CORWIN—No, I certainly don't. You and I must see a lot of each other. I felt somehow we had a lot in common, right at first. (*And, the best of it was, he really meant it, every word of it came from his heart. You can't blame him, ladies! You can just sympathize with him, and envy him a lot, too. It's a great thing to be able to feel with people, really feel with them.*) Why, I feel right now as if we had known each other for years, Miss Morrison. Oh, I can't call you that now. What is your name?

MISS MORRISON (*rising*)—I'm so tired, tired of life! Why, there have been times when they've called me good and estimable and respectable that I—I—I— (*with rising passion*) Why, there was nothing, hardly, that I wouldn't have done, I was so disgusted. Look, I'm only thirty now, and I've worked always, ever since I was eighteen, and been good and estimable and respectable. I look like an old woman. I want life and love and everything. Oh, I want things so. (*There was no doubt of it now, Miss*

Morrison was pretty, even very pretty, and Corwin thought her beautiful, and you might have thought so, too, for her cheeks were very red. Really, the greatest tragedy we live is that of monotony, only we don't understand it, but Corwin did. Perhaps it was because he'd always lived so hard himself—I don't know—anyway, he did.) I want things so. I want to be pretty and happy and gay.

CORWIN—Ah, I know! (*Catching her in his arms.*) And you shall, my darling. (*Kisses her repeatedly on lips, eyes and hair. She struggles for a moment, and then is passive.*) We will be happy, you and I. We'll get married first of all, and then we'll travel, and everything will be beautiful. I am very wretched, too. I have just broken my engagement to the girl I thought I was in love with. She's thrown me over because she thought I'd done something I hadn't done at all, and she wouldn't believe me. We'll make each other happy, dear. It will be just you and me in all the world, against all the world.

(*He kisses her again. She opens her eyes, puts her arms around his neck and kisses him. Their lips meet in a long kiss, and it is her first, dear people! Don't laugh at her; it's really not very funny. We are all Cinderellas sometime in our lives and think our world is transformed by the wave of a fairy godmother's wand. The reason we think so is that once in a million times it's true. That's what we base all our illusions on, the fact that we know sometimes that they aren't illusions, but true. It's that that breaks our hearts in the end, or, rather, that nearly does, for hearts aren't broken; there's no such luck. We live on with the battered articles. His arms close round her, they stand, she clinging to him. At last she gives a little sigh of content and weariness.*)

MISS MORRISON—I think I'm probably quite mad, but (*recklessly*) I'm happy, happy! Did you ever feel as if you were dreaming and all the time were afraid that you'd wake up?

(*They move to the sofa and sit down, Corwin's arm around her. He kisses her again.*)

CORWIN—You shan't wake up, you poor little starved thing! I'll show you the world. Have you ever heard the call of it?

MISS MORRISON (*hands clasped, eyes brilliant, and you can't blame her: it's the first time anyone has even tried to understand her.*)—Haven't I? Nights when I've gone home to my boarding-house I've sat in my window and been mad, the moon has called me so, to just get up and go; and then often I've gone down to the bay and seen the great white ships go sailing out, and heard the little ripples on the beach, and smelled the salt in the air, and it's pulled my heart right out of me. I've envied tramps and birds and all wild things. I've sat and dreamed till my soul was pulling at my body so I almost felt myself starting. When I went to sleep I dreamed of all those happy lands and of adventures of every sort and kind, and I trembled with the lure of the light of the moon. Oh, we have so much to do together! I know it can't happen; it's all much too wonderful, too beautiful, to happen to me!

CORWIN—It isn't, you see. Have faith, you little thing. (*And truly this delightful young man, for there are some men who are young at thirty-eight, was swept off his feet, and, while he was, of course, enjoying himself hugely, he was also terribly in earnest.*)—I'm going to make you live and know and see. You'll have pretty gowns to wear, and never be called estimable. (*He laughs boyishly, and, after all, if we are really women, the boyish quality is the most appealing!*) You'll forget this old typewriter and together we'll forget my honored uncle, who really is a remarkably unpleasant person, even if you won't admit it. We'll be married this week. What a relief not to have to go through a wedding! (*Then, very gently*) Kiss me, Margaret.

MISS MORRISON (*kisses him and they are quiet a moment, and, when she speaks, it is happily, not fearfully, as*

if she were talking of something far and away, which she has no possible idea of ever happening)—And suppose, dear, that she, the girl you are engaged to, forgave you, what then? Are you certain you would love me and not regret for an instant that you had married me?

CORWIN (*looking a little serious for a moment, but speaking with his usual gaiety, though you and I might have thought it did not sound quite natural*)—She won't ever forgive me, dear. That's all over and done with. And, beside, it would not matter, anyway; we're going to be the happiest couple in all the world. The very stars will hide their faces in envy of us. We'll wander till we're tired, and then settle down somewhere and keep house till the fever comes again. We'll prove all sorts of delightful things.

MISS MORRISON (*drawing close to him and laying her hand on his breast. It is a beautiful hand, as I told you before, and Corwin, looking down, appreciates the fact, and kisses the slender fingers one by one as she speaks*)—Are you certain, quite certain, that you won't regret?

CORWIN—Little foolish! Of course!

MISS MORRISON—Then perhaps it's not a dream, after all. Perhaps dreams do come true, and the world is a bright and beautiful place. Perhaps it's all real. Give me your hand, beloved. You're real; it's all real, and I'm not just Margaret Morrison, a machine, but (*triumphantly*) a woman!

CORWIN (*tenderly*)—Very much a woman. You'll have things you never dreamed of.

MISS MORRISON—There is not a thing in this world I've not dreamed of, but of late my dreams have hurt so that I've put them from me, and tried to live in what was here around me, though it took all the color from my life.

(*Now, Corwin, delightful as he is, is not a dreamer. He's full of instinctive understanding and quick sympathies with people, and his intuitions are wonderful. It's the only feminine thing*

about him, for he is distinctly a man's man, almost aggressively masculine. It's the mingling of the two qualities that constitutes his chief charm. He can't just see how dreams with no basis of truth can add color to one's life, but, then, he sees other things, and so he takes her hand, which she has let drop, and his voice is full of tender understanding.)

CORWIN—Your life shall be full of real color, not the reflected kind—of color and warmth and joy. You'll forget that you ever had to dream.

MISS MORRISON—I don't quite think I want to forget that, because it will make the reality seem all the sweeter to have dreamed it all before. Think of being precious to someone! I've been alone in the world since I was eighteen. Best of all, to be able to love one—that is the most beautiful of all!

CORWIN (*who, for the first time, is really beyond his depth, but his sympathy again covers the fact delightfully*)—Darling!

(*There is another pause and then a noise is heard at the doorway, and Mr. Nelson, a typically respectable, prosperous, patronizing member of society, well past sixty, comes in. Miss Morrison goes to the typewriter and Corwin stands in front of her, so that she is obscured from the rest of the room.*)

MR. NELSON—Arthur, I have news for you. Fortune is better to you than (*speaking with severity*) I fear you deserve.

CORWIN—Thank you, uncle. What's the news?

MR. NELSON—I would say before I tell you that I hope that in the future you will strive to preserve your good luck and prove a better son and nephew and a worthier citizen.

CORWIN (*impatiently*)—Yes, yes, but what's the news?

(*Miss Morrison is leaning forward in her chair, unobserved, but observing, her hands tightly clasped on the top of her typewriter. During the ensuing scene it is mostly by her hands and her strained body that she exhibits any emotion. Her face is in profile towards*

the audience, and her expression, as far as can be seen, is one of concentrated interest.)

MR. NELSON—You shall learn the news in all good time, Arthur. In the meantime let me tell you again that I expect better things for you in the future, and if I don't see them I shall have to reconsider my will, even if your father chooses to persist in his ill-advised generosity.

CORWIN (*with his ever-radiant smile*)—But one thing, sir. Father may be ill-advised, but if I make a mess of it rich, think what a much worse one I would make of it poor. Now, uncle, most generous and noble of uncles, take pity on your benighted nevvie and tell me the truth, what is the news? Think of what suspense means to a man of my years, and consider the result, sir.

MR. NELSON (*with an unwilling smile, goes to door*)—I shan't tell you, but here it is. (*He opens the door, and, very shyly, Hester comes into the room. She is small and very pretty, with golden curls, big, appealing blue eyes, and the most tantalizing of dimples. She is dressed charmingly, and is in every respect the most feminine and adorable of women. She has little, clinging hands, and a plaintive, pathetic way of speaking. She stands in the doorway, half smiling, half frightened, with her hand resting on the knob. Mr. Nelson stands a moment, smiling, for, like all the grumpy old men who have let their figures get the best of them, he likes romance, and is enormously proud of his nephew, despite his faults, and, truly, they do look an ideal pair of lovers. Mr. Nelson and Hester do not know that Miss Morrison is in the room, and Corwin has forgotten. He has forgotten everything in the world but the little figure in the doorway, as she stands, as if uncertain and prepared for a flight.*) Here's your news. (*And then Mr. Nelson, the dear man, goes, feeling just as romantic as if he did not grumble over his meals every day.*)

CORWIN (*who gazes at Hester as if he has never seen anything in the world*

so bright and fair, and his voice actually trembles, and, truly, he's in earnest, for his emotion for this woman constitutes the greatest love he has ever known)—What does this mean?

HESTER (*coming forward a step into the room and holding out one hand*)—It means that if you still want me—Oh, Arthur, I was so silly. Just after you left I found out my mistake, and—(*but by this time he has his arms around her and is holding her as if he would never let her go. If anyone had been listening he would have heard a little muffled sound from Miss Morrison and seen her cover her face with her hands a second and then return to her old position of watchful waiting.*) Are you certain you can forgive my mistrusting you? I never will again. Father was coming here on business, and I knew you had come to see your uncle, so I just made Father bring me, too. Arthur, what a dear your uncle is.

CORWIN—You darling, you darling! What have I ever done to deserve you? I don't know. I love you! Tell me that you love me, Hester.

HESTER—I love you, dear.

(*All of which sounds like another love scene that has just been enacted in the same room; but, after all, though Corwin is an acknowledged expert in love-making, the outward signs are always much the same. Sometimes in the midst of your most fervent love scenes, don't you strike a chord that brings clearly before your mind a memory of year before last? Of course you do, and how you hate it—we all do!*)

CORWIN—How did you find out the truth, beloved?

(*How awfully well Corwin said "beloved." It makes me envy Hester, even at my age!*)

HESTER—Charlie told me. (*Really, you love Hester yourself; she is so little and clinging and lovable. She'll probably bore Corwin after they are married, but he'll always love her and be proud of her, too, because other men will envy his treasure. They certainly will always envy him.*) And then I cried in the most absurd fashion, and my nose

and eyes got all red, and you would have hated me, Arthur. (*Here Corwin kisses her again.*) No, you would have, really. And then, of course, I thought of father's trip and all was well. It would have been too horrid to have explained my letter (*contentedly*). I was quite certain that if I could see you, you would forgive me.

CORWIN—How could anyone not forgive you anything? Besides, there is nothing to forgive.

(*Enter Mr. Nelson, whose curiosity is so strong that he couldn't keep out another minute.*)

MR. NELSON—Well, is everything settled satisfactorily? (*Rubbing his hands.*) Are we going to dance at a wedding soon?

HESTER (*she goes up to him and puts her hand on his shoulder*)—Will you promise to dance with me (*shyly*), uncle?

MR. NELSON (*bending down and kissing her*)—I promise, and I'm delighted. If everything Arthur did pleased me as much as this—(*suddenly catching sight of Miss Morrison, who instantly assumes her businesslike expression and begins to work, though her cheeks are flushed and her eyes are brighter than usual.*) By Jove! Have you been there all the time?

(*Hester starts and looks over at the stranger with a most fascinating blush, and, as for Corwin, he looks as if someone had struck him. Probably for the first time in his victorious, heedless, irresponsible career he feels utterly lost. Miss Morrison, however, is perfectly composed, and her voice is as calm as it ever was.*)

MISS MORRISON—Yes, sir, I have been here all the morning, finishing the work you left me, sir. Shall you want me this afternoon, sir?

(*Her calm is so perfect that everyone feels it, too, except Corwin. He looks up and tries to catch her eye, but she, though she is evidently conscious of this effort, continues to look at Mr. Nelson.*)

MR. NELSON—Yes, I shall, Miss

Morrison; I have some very important things.

(*Enter Butler at doorway, speaks, and then exits at once.*)

BUTLER—Luncheon is served, sir.

MR. NELSON (*with evident relief*)—Ah, very well. Come, children. Hester, I don't think you met my secretary, Miss Morrison.

HESTER (*prettily*)—How do you do?

MISS MORRISON—How do you do?

MR. NELSON—Miss Morrison is a most valuable assistant. I'll be in right after lunch, Miss Morrison.

HESTER—Good-bye. I'm so glad to have met you. (*Hester is always polite to everybody. Corwin stands by the door, dumbly miserable. Hester takes his hand and smiles.*) Come, Arthur.

(*They all exit except Miss Morrison, who has risen when introduced to Hester. She now stands for a moment rigid. The Butler enters with her lunch on a tray, which he places on a small table, drawing a chair up for her.*)

BUTLER—Your lunch, Miss Morrison. I hope everything will be satisfactory, Miss.

MISS MORRISON—Perfectly, thank you.

(*She sits down. Exit Butler. She sits as one in a dream, mechanically spreading out her napkin and buttering her bread. She puts her hands to her eyes once or twice as if bewildered. Very softly Corwin comes in the door and stands looking at her. His expression is one of genuine sorrow and uncertainty. Never was he more lovable.*)

CORWIN—May I speak to you a moment?

MISS MORRISON (*who does not even look surprised*)—Yes. (*Her voice is dull and even.*)

CORWIN—Of course, I know there is nothing to say. I am no end sorry. (*He sits down on the sofa and leans his head on his hands, a most pathetic object.*) I don't know what to say, except that I meant it all at the time, really, and, if Hester had not come in,

we would have been happy. I only came in to explain now because I didn't want you to think—

MISS MORRISON (*who has risen*)—Yes.

CORWIN—I can only say I don't know what to say. Oh, don't you understand? (*with one of his appealing gestures.*)

MISS MORRISON (*comes and stands behind him. Her face is alive now and very tender. She puts out her hand, as if she would touch his hair, and then draws it back quickly*)—Yes, I understand. (*For a moment she is really beautiful, but it is not the face of a woman in love, but of the eternal maternal. That is where men like Corwin win out. They appeal to the maternal in women, always.*) I understand.

CORWIN (*rising*)—I must go in to lunch now. They'll be wondering what's become of me. (*Looks at her*). You think me an awful bounder. What are you going to do now?

MISS MORRISON (*the tenderness has all left her face now, and she is the dull stenographer again, with bitterness added to the hopelessness, and yet she's had something of life, and she will realize it later, when she thinks about it. She raises her hand in a gesture pathetic because of its hopelessness*)—Just what I have been doing.

(*He looks at her as she stands, dull, expressionless, with her arms to her sides.*)

MISS MORRISON (*as if reading his*

thoughts)—There is nothing you can do (*with apathy*). I understand. Good-bye.

CORWIN (*hesitatingly*)—Good-bye.

(*He hesitates a minute more, and then goes out. She stands still as he has left her. Mr. Nelson enters, fussy and irritable. Miss Morrison goes at once to her desk, all her movements expressing apathy and fatigue.*)

MR. NELSON—Gets the most charming girl possible and then goes off and spends all luncheon looking for his handkerchief, and all the girl says is she's afraid he's gotten a cold! Spoils him! They all spoil him to death. Miss Morrison, you ought to be glad you work for your living and don't come in contact with good-for-nothings like my nephew. I told him just now he could learn a lot from you in patience and sense of responsibility. Now—let—me—see—Miss Morrison, are you ready? (*Sits down.*)

MISS MORRISON—Yes, sir.

MR. NELSON—By the way, I wanted to tell you, because you are such a respectable and worthy young woman, Miss Morrison, and on account of the excellence of your work, I have decided to raise your salary ten dollars a month. This is another proof of how conscientiousness and virtue are rewarded.

MISS MORRISON—Thank you, sir.

MR. NELSON—Are you ready? "Mr. James F. Martin. Dear Sir: I have received your letter of the 23rd instant, and—"

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A GENIUS is a fool with a good press-agent. A good press-agent is a fool with genius.



LOVE FOR A DAY

By Maurice Samuel

AT the very gate of the garden he stopped and paused in the darkness with his hand on the topmost bar. A sudden thought had lit up the blackness of his mood, and, as it took distinct form, it made him turn slowly and look back at the yellow-lit blind adorned with the triplicated shadow of a plant. He stood for a moment with lips tightened and brows drawn together, and then began to walk back to the house.

As he clicked the latch down he heard a startled motion inside, and, opening the door, he saw her standing under the light, her clasped hands on her bosom. "Oh! is it you, Armand?" she said. "You almost frightened me."

He came into the room and put his hat on the little table.

"Sit down, please, Madeleine," he said, "I won't keep you longer than a couple of minutes."

He sat down in the large chair opposite her and remained silent for a little while, looking at her face, his elbows on his knees, his fingers twisted together.

"Listen, Madeleine," he began at last. "You mustn't think I've come back because I have anything against your decision. I bow to that unconditionally. . . . I have come back to ask a favor of you. And for the sake of our friendship, and of all the years that we have spent together, I hope you will not refuse it."

"I will do my best, Armand."

"It is not too difficult, Madeleine. What you have said to me to-night makes it impossible for me to stay here any longer, or indeed, to stay any longer anywhere near you. And I had

decided, when I went out of here, to leave France. And that decision still holds good with me, but that I have deferred my departure by one day. . . . I had intended to go to-night. As it is, I want to go to-morrow night. To-morrow I want you to do me this favor. Now, mark me, Madeleine, it is a favor, and not a debt. I ask it, not demand it. And this is the favor. To-morrow I want you to spend the whole day with me, as you have often done. We will go, let us say, to Agrement woods. And to-morrow I want to make believe that we two are lovers, declared to each other and accepted. We will talk as if we were to be married some day, as if our lives were to be spent forever together. If you find this too hard, then I will talk, and you will only listen; to me the thoughts will come easily enough. To-morrow evening, when we part, I will leave you for ever and ever. Madeleine, grant me this one day of happiness—let this be the last, as it will be the best, of all your gifts."

He kept his eager eyes on her face, watching a mischievous smile come out upon her lips. She did not answer him for some time. Then she looked up. "I will grant it you, Armand," she said.

He seized her hands and pressed them warmly.

"Thank you, Madeleine, thank you a hundred thousand times. Then to-morrow we are beloved, and you will love me and I will love you. One day at least. . . . Well listen, then. We will meet at eight in the morning at the Gare St. Lazare. It will be one of our old, happy days, except that to-morrow I will be happier than ever I was be-

fore—for to-morrow you will love me. So, Madeleine, remember, eight in the morning, at the Gare St. Lazare."

"I will not forget, Armand."

"Good night, then, dear one."

"Good night, Armand."

In the faint flush of the earliest twilight he was standing at the open window of his room and looking down the deserted street. He saw the grey tint of dawn reflected in the shining car-rails, and noted the peculiar, blobby shadows at the feet of the standards and lamp-posts. Further away, where the Jardins des Luxembourg began, the mist deepened, and only a pale, unnatural green showed dimly. The trees on the Boulevard St. Michel looked gaunt and lonely, as if the fulness of their life blossomed only when the revellers were abroad beneath their branches. Looking up Armand saw that there was scarcely a cloud in the heavens. The sun was just a little below the horizon.

The dawn came up slowly. Armand was not impatient. He sat at the window and mused on things past and to come. Certain of the coming day, he revolved in his mind the happiness in store for him. Strange little memories flashed over the screen of his mind: the memory of a sun-glint on Madeleine's hair, the memory of a careless smile of hers, the memory of many scornful thoughts and expressions. He laughed quietly once or twice.

A few minutes after seven he went down and breakfasted simply at a café. Then he took the car at the corner of the Rue des Ecoles. The streets were beginning to fill. The car was crowded with women—market-women bound for Les Halles; they carried baskets of flowers, peaches and tomatoes and bags of potatoes. Armand looked on them with a peculiar pleasure. They were so normal, so healthy. At the corner of the Boulevard St. Denis the news-boys boarded the car, crying in their shrill childish voices "*Demandez Le Matin!*" "*Voyez L'Information!*" Armand bought a paper because the young face of a newsboy pleased him. He

gave him a franc and waved aside the change. The child's stupefied delight made him smile. He looked unseeingly at the paper. Somehow all things were conspiring to make him happy. The consciousness of it filled him with a double contentment.

He was sitting with his face turned in the direction in which the car was going, and he was surprised to see from a distance that, in front of the great station, Madeleine was already waiting for him. Then his surprise gave way to a triumphant question. "Why not? Does she not love me as I love her?"

"Good morning, Madeleine."

"Good morning, Armand."

She submitted to his kiss, though she knew this time that it conveyed something more than a cousin's affection. Then she passed her arm into his and they strolled across the yard into the station.

"Where are we going, Armand?" she asked.

"Where you will, Madeleine," he answered.

"No," she said, with a smile, "where *you* will. This is your day."

"Then Agremont woods and the sea," he answered. "That is the only place on a day like this."

The sun, which had already mounted the clear heavens, poured a stream of light into the dusty station, and added to it a touch of misplaced gaiety. There was a ceaseless hurrying, shouting and ringing. A vast number of trains were pouring their passengers into Paris, and every man and woman of the rushing crowds was intent on the day's work. Armand and Madeleine felt themselves out of place till they had left the station.

The train which carried them northwards out of Paris was almost empty. In their carriage there was, besides themselves, an old man who spent his time reading a newspaper severely or looking out of the window over the top of his spectacles. Madeleine and Armand sat opposite each other, she looking for the most part at the passing scenery, he for the most part watch-

ing the sunlight on her dreamy face or studying the gay pattern on her semi-transparent blouse. He sat in his favorite attitude, his knees wide apart, his elbows on his knees, his fingers twisted together. Now and then he would say something, and she would turn her eyes upon him to make answer. He was content to be almost silent till they were in the woods, or on the edge of the sea. The silence, he felt, set the seal upon their new intimacy, and made them both ready for the many things he wanted to say.

They arrived at the southern end of Agremont at about eleven. There they alighted and lunched at a little restaurant on the edge of the woods. On a week day such as this, Agremont woods were almost empty, and one might wander from Bellefond, in the south, right to the cliffs at Rambuteau, at the northern end, and meet perhaps a peasant woman with a basket or a heavy wain creaking along under the thick shadows of the trees.

Noon had passed when they entered the woods. As they passed from the outer edge, where the light was yet full, into the inner groves, where the shadows were broader, and the light was dimmer, they became even more silent than before. Armand feared to speak unless it were to say all that he had to say to her.

Here and there the slanting beams of the sun struck across the dimness; they looked like pillars of a rare and delicate stone that had fallen sideways and were leaning their heads on the tops of the trees. The grass grew thick underfoot, starred with bluebells and buttercups, and from time to time the roots of trees writhed across their path like petrified snakes. Arm in arm they walked slowly on, till, when they turned round, they could no longer see the white walls and the red roofs of the village of Bellefond. They had been walking for half an hour when Armand stopped near a heavy-leaved sycamore.

"Let us sit down here, Madeleine," he said quietly.

He spread a handkerchief for her

against a root that had bent its back upwards, and when she had seated herself he took his place by her side, and lay on his right elbow, and looked into her face. She sat with her hands in her lap, her eyes drooping.

"Madeleine," he said, after a few moments, "only once have you seemed to me more beautiful than you seem now."

He reached out his left hand and toyed with her slender fingers.

"When, Armand?" she asked.

"Do you remember the ball in the Montparnasse last winter? You were covered from head to foot with nothing but lace and lace and lace."

"I remember it."

"Well, then you seemed to me like Aphrodite, risen from the evening sea in a burst of spray."

"Always the poet, Armand."

She laughed and then turned to him, as if curious to hear him say more. Her fingers responded to his touch.

"Tell me, Armand, when did you find out that you loved me?"

"Oh, I do not know that, Madeleine. I only know that every moment that I speak to you I love you more and more."

"And why is that?" she asked, teasingly.

"Because," he answered seriously, "the more you tell your love, the greater it becomes. But I could not remember now when I did *not* love you. It seems to me now that I loved you when we were children together at Bordeaux, and when we lived here at Agremont, and all the days that we have been at Paris. No, not it seems—it must have been so! But I never dreamt that you would love me as you do in return."

She half started, as though she had forgotten their pact to be lovers for the day: then a dancing light came into their eyes. Her fingers closed tighter on Armand's.

"And now tell me, Armand, why do you say that it *must* have been so?"

"Then listen, Madeleine. When I look back upon my plans, when I arrange my hopes in order and take sum of my ambitions, I see that you have al-

ways been the inspirer. Without you the ambitions are dust and shadow—worthless—galling. If a man had arranged a great banquet, and, coming to the banquet, had found the meats there and the wines, and the flowers, and the lights, and the music—but not a single guest, he would feel as I would feel to my ambitions if you were not in the centre of them.”

“And what would you have done if I had not—accepted you?”

“I would have killed myself.”

Her sudden laugh rang out like a shrill, clear bell. A grave smile quivered for a moment on his lips and then passed off abruptly.

“But now,” she said, with a light mockery in her voice, “there is no need for you to kill yourself, is there?”

“Not now,” he said. Then, after a pause, he added, “yet, after all, perhaps now more than ever.”

“Why, thou poet?” she asked, in the same mocking voice.

“Because in the moment of love the perfection of life has been reached. There is nothing more to look forward to achieving when once a woman has said to you, ‘I love you.’ But there is a better reason: that life will spoil the perfection of this love. The years pass and we change: we become less beautiful to each other, and ourselves becoming less lovely we are less able to love. The little things of life make great things mean, and what was once a glorious, all-compelling love becomes jealous, spite, hatred—everything loathsome. Else it merely ceases, and its memory becomes a shame.”

His steadfast seriousness made her pause in her lightness, and she questioned him no more. Armand sat up and plucked a bunch of hyacinths from a clump near by. Then, with their four hands in her lap, they commenced to pull them to pieces very slowly. Two butterflies came out from behind them and dazzled their way through the trees. The wind, rising and falling, gave the deep rustling of the trees an irregular rhythm, approaching that of a chant in a strange tongue. The moving of the

boughs made shapeless patches of light cross and recross their intertwined fingers. When they had plucked the bunch to pieces Armand swept them together in his two palms, rolled them into a ball, and flung them from him. “Finis,” he said.

“Listen, Madeleine,” he went on, taking her hand again. “Have you ever considered how hard it is for a man to tell a woman that he loves, especially if he be a poet? The thing has been said so often, and in such a variety of ways, that nothing he will say will not seem to him borrowed, or trite, or shallow. One man says, ‘I love you,’ another says, ‘*Ich liebe dich*,’ and a third ‘*Je t’aime*.’ One man declaims it in an epic, another sings it in a lyric, and a third lets silence speak for him. What has been left to us modern poets to do? Unless we are poets of the highest genius, we must be dumb, and even that unoriginally.” He laughed softly. “You must teach me a new tongue, Madeleine.”

But his whimsical lightness did not make her smile.

“Oh, Armand,” she cried out, “I do believe that you love me.”

“Then why are you so gloomy, dear one?”

She turned her head away. Armand did not press the question, but looked, still smiling, at her averted face.

How long they had been sitting there neither of them could have said when Armand rose and said, “Let us go from here. Let us go to the sea.” Madeleine, looking upon him, saw that he was paler than before, and he spoke as with a beating heart. She rose without a word, and gave him her arm.

The forest was a little more quiet than before, for the wind had died down. The slanting pillars of light had a mellower touch in them, and the faint buzzing of insects, before discernible when they paused and listened, was altogether hushed. They walked slowly.

“Listen, Madeleine,” said Armand. “When I came into the woods with you, there were a thousand things I wanted to say—I have not said one

of them. I do not know why this is so—but I have not dared to say them. But let that pass. One thing there is that I must say . . . I do not believe that you can love long. You are too shallow . . . you are insincere. There is too much laughter in you, and your eyes are too bright. You can love for a time and no more. But something here—” he stopped and pressed his clenched hand to his breast—“something here makes all my beliefs into mad mockeries. I know these things, yet it is of no avail to know them. Never did I truly believe that when I had won your love it would last forever, or even for long. And yet—”

He ceased altogether. She listened in amaze to his sudden denunciation. Something deeper down than she had ever known before made response to his words.

“Armand, what you say is true.”

He turned suddenly to her.

“And yet,” he repeated fiercely, “when God lit the first of the stars, he lit my love, and it has been burning ever since.”

He mastered himself with a great effort.

“You will admit all that I have said in a momentary sincerity, but that will pass,” he said.

Presently they came out upon the road that leads east and west from Blanche-Nef to Tulle, and splits the wood into two. Then they went to a farmhouse and took a meal at a table set in the open, in the shadow of the trees.

From this road to the sea it is less than a mile, and they began to walk when the sun was still well clear of the horizon.

Very soon they could see through the last trees the cottages of Rambuteau and a few minutes later they came out upon the table land and saw the further circle of the sea over the edge of the cliff. As they came nearer to the edge the plain of sea stretched and widened, and they saw first the ridges of foam, and then the long lines of spray breaking on the sands. For a

while they stood there watching the white lines sweep in, and listening to the subdued rushing of the foam. Then, “Let us go down to the sands, Madeleine,” said Armand, “I know a way.”

They turned to the right. Armand led her by a winding, chalky path, strewn with boulders and sharp little rocks. Half way down they came to a shallow stream that burst from the side of the cliff and cut off their path. The stream was but two strides wide, but there were no projecting stones by which to cross. For a moment they stood there in perplexity, then Armand stooped and lifted Madeleine in his arms. She gave a startled gasp and twined her arms about his neck. He strode across and then set her down carefully.

When they came to the level sands the tide was going out. The sun was down on their left, growing broader and more golden, and a cool wind came in from the sea. Armand and Madeleine sat down side by side and played idly with their fingers in the sand. Armand saw how an invisible hand seemed to run along the crest of each incoming wave, making the body of the wave curve inward and the fringed crown curl over in a flying cloud of foam. Now and again Madeleine stole a look at him, and noted his pallid face and weary eyes. Suddenly Armand turned, and lay down with his head in her lap, and took her hands in his.

“Madeleine,” he said, almost in a whisper. “There is only one place for a man who is weary of all things. . . . Here in your lap the pain seems to grow duller, and it is easier to forget.”

She was looking out to sea, but knew that his eyes were fixed on her face.

“The sun is sinking very fast, Armand,” she said.

“It is day until the sun is below the horizon,” he answered, and, turning, cast a glance along the burning sea.

“The day will soon be at an end,” she said.

She looked at him, but he did not see the tenderness in her eyes, for he was still looking at the sunlight on the sea.

When he turned she was looking this time across the water, and smiling to herself.

"Madeleine," said Armand, still almost in a whisper, "how miserable are all things without your love. Without it my life is one long pain. There is not hope for any man that has not love."

He pressed her hands to his breast. His voice trembled into silence.

"Armand," she said, and smiled again, "the sun is almost fallen."

"There is still some sunlight on your face."

A few moments passed and she looked again across the water.

"The sun is gone," she said.

Armand looked up. Her eyes were fixed on the far edge of the sea. His hand passed across his mouth.

He drew her down to him, his arms about her. He spoke with terrifying swiftness.

"Madeleine, Madeleine, there is still daylight. Tell me that you love me."

Her lips were close to his. A new light blazed up in her eyes: her heart beat with strange wildness. "Armand, but I do love you, I do love you, I do love you!"

Their lips came together. Her arms held him closer and ever closer. Sea and sky and earth flashed together in a whirling mist. . . .

Suddenly she felt him relax. She lifted up her face, and saw that a dead whiteness had spread over his cheeks and brow. His eyes were closed. His arms unclasped themselves from about her, and fell down heavily.



FIVE O'CLOCK TEA

By Beatrice Redpath

I WATCHED the sun's slim fingers gild her hair,
 That red-haired woman who had been my friend;
 He sat there mostly silent in his chair
 Just where the laurel bushes drooping bend.
 I forced the smile too often to my lips
 And spoke so eagerly of trifling things,
 She drank her tea with little careful sips
 And flashed the sunlight from her finger rings.
 I offered her small cakes and cups of tea;
 He rose to light her little cigarette,
 And then I looked away so not to see
 How closely 'neath the flame their fingers met.
 I saw her quick sweet glance at him, her smile,
 Half hid beneath the wide brimmed hat she wore.
 And still I hoped that she'd remain awhile,
 Knowing he'd kiss her when beyond the door.



BEFORE a man speaks it is always safe to assume that he is a dampfool.
 After he speaks, it is no longer necessary to assume it.

TO THE MEMORY OF AMELIA

By Katherine Synon

VERNER, following Louis Morosi into the black and white dining-room that struck a curiously bizarre overtone above the subtler oriental harmonies of the Morosi home, noticed the fourth chair at the table and wondered for an instant if the Morosis had been expecting Tommy Carew's return. Then, remembering how the Morosis had always, since Amelia died, set a place at their table to the memory of their daughter, he frowned slightly at the task fate had laid upon his spare shoulders, wishing that he might postpone its performance to the morrow, and yet knowing inevitably that he must say his lines before he repassed through the black velvet portieres that cut off the room from the warm rose colorings of the drawing-room.

The austerity of the place, with its dead white walls, its marble columns, its mosaic floor, its ebony table, chairs and sideboards, its black-shaded lights, seemed to Verner to-night to have been designed particularly to emphasize Louis Morosi's emphatically etched personality. Into it Morosi had poured the essential oils of that amazing art of dramatic effect that had done quite as much as his skill in placing him in his particular niche as the greatest surgeon in New York. Into it he himself fitted as neatly as a cathedral tower into an etching, dominant, aspiring, and yet eminently part of the picture. Mrs. Morosi, a full-blown rose of a woman for all the severity of her black velvet gown, showed even to Verner's kindly eyes how far out of focus she was from her husband's carefully considered effects. To-night though, as never before, she reminded him vaguely of

Amelia, recalling to him days when the girl had filled the house with the charm of a personality that had set in the background even Louis Morosi's compelling power of attracting and holding the men and women who interested him.

As he sat opposite Morosi, Verner visualized Amelia as she had so often looked when she had taken her place at the ebony table. The silken shades on the lamps had been soft pink in those days, Verner remembered, and under their light, Amelia, always in some faint tint of pink chiffons, had seemed an exquisite rosebud set in an alabaster vase. In those times the blacks of the Morosi dining-room had been but a piquant touch to bring out the white and pinkness of the table linens and the table roses, of Mrs. Morosi's opulent blooming and of her daughter's radiant budding. Now, the blacks had become harsh lines that thrust into their foreground Morosi's white hair and dark eyes, just as some quality they suggested emphasized Morosi's sharply defined mysticism. There was nothing arithmetic about Louis Morosi; neither was there anything softly sentimental about him. Even his strange devotion to his daughter's memory, a devotion that had excited the wonder of his friends and the curiosity of his acquaintances for the three years since Amelia's death, burned with a white flame of aspiration rather than with a rose-hued fire of sentiment.

With the picture of Amelia vividly in his mind, Verner conned swiftly the story of the girl's romance and its strange effects upon the relationship of the Morosis and their son-in-law.

He wondered, as Mrs. Morosi talked

to him of the merits of the new housekeeper, and he kept nodding mandarinic acquiescence of her monologue, if Tommy Carew had really loved Amelia before he married her. Tommy Carew had been an obscure interne in a private hospital, a handsome, cleanly, ambitious youngster, when Amelia Morosi had seen him. Three months later he was transferred to Morosi's own magnificent institution. Before the end of his internship he had married Morosi's daughter and gone to live in Morosi's house. From the day of his marriage Tommy Carew had been alien to the society of which he had been so vitally part in his years in New York before he met Amelia. The Morosis made their friends also friends to Tommy Carew; and as friends of the Morosis were men and women of the first rank in the making of ideas scientific and artistic in America, Tommy Carew grew so fast in mental inches that he seemed to have outgrown the garments of desire for the people of his younger times. Swiftly, with his professional versatility, he had fitted into place in the Morosi household, becoming so integrally a part of its life that his old world wondered, when the time came, how Amelia's death would leave him stranded after it had jerked him from the new soil in which he had been thriving after her transplanting of him.

Verner reviewed, watching Morosi's silent consideration of his changing plates, the course that Morosi had adopted toward Tommy Carew after Amelia's death. He remembered with a flicker of amusement how the older man had supervised the opening and the answering of all the notes of condolence that Tommy's friends, old and new, had written him. He pondered on Morosi's method in taking Tommy from the operating-room and setting him at the laboratory end of the work in spite of the protests of some of the most influential physicians in the country, men who believed in Carew's skill and who predicted a splendid future for the boy if he were permitted to continue in the work Morosi had given to him

under Amelia's requests. He recalled Morosi's careful supervision of Tommy's habits, Tommy's friends, Tommy's tendencies. He let his sophisticated eyelids come down over his review of how cautiously Morosi had kept Tommy apart from the possible contact with women. No youthful acolyte was ever guarded by abbot with half the jealous care that Louis Morosi spent upon his son-in-law.

For jealous care it surely was, Verner knew, its inspiration lying in the older man's love for the girl whose vacant chair always stood in this black and white room. Morosi was trying to keep Tommy Carew faithful to Amelia. To that end he had sacrificed time, interest, and the privacy of his home, everything possible that might tend to divert him from his object. He had planned his enterprises for three years with the thought of finding for Carew a place that would keep him out of temptation, temptation being the other woman who might take Amelia's place in Tommy Carew's heart. Even now Tommy Carew, permitted to go to Chicago to read a paper of Morosi's to an international convention of surgeons, was surrounded by a spy system that made its report to Verner on any possible entanglement of a sentimental nature. Morosi made no secret to Verner of his attitude. It was therefore in keeping with his method that he should speak to his hospital superintendent frankly of something that occupied so much of his thoughts.

"What's keeping Thomas in Chicago?" he asked.

Mrs. Morosi, ending her monologue of admiration of the housekeeper, as soon as her husband showed signs of speech, regarded Verner with new interest.

"Oh, the placing of the next convention probably," he told them both.

"There's no hurry, is there, for him to come back?" Mrs. Morosi asked.

"Not at all," Morosi said.

Only the week before he and Verner had tacitly decided that the return to New York of Mary Stanton, who had

almost married Tommy Carew before Amelia Morosi had known of his existence, necessitated the absence from the city of Morosi's son-in-law at the time when that attractive young woman should be coming in at the docks.

"I rather like Chicago," Mrs. Morosi contributed, "but—" She let her objection trail off into space as Morosi asked, "Have you heard from Thomas to-day?"

"Not directly," Verner answered.

"He didn't wire?"

"No."

"I wonder if he can be ill," Mrs. Morosi questioned.

"Oh, he frequently lets two or three days pass without wiring," Verner explained.

"Did he wire you yesterday?" Morosi asked.

"No."

"And he hadn't the day before? Something's wrong." Morosi's dark eyes brooded over the table. "What does Blake say?"

"Blake's ill."

"Who's doing his work?"

"His assistant, a boy just out of Johns Hopkins. I suppose that he's not altogether equal to the management of a big convention like that, so Thomas has had to help with it. He's probably been too busy to wire."

"Didn't Blake wire?"

"Oh, yes," Verner said. "Blake sent a wire." He had an impulse under Morosi's questioning to take the yellow slip from his pocket and hand it to the man across the table, but something in Mrs. Morosi's face restrained him. He didn't want to be there when she heard the news that Blake's telegram contained. Morosi's eyes flashed at him. "What does Blake say?"

"He says," Verner told half the truth, "that he has been ill three days with tonsillitis."

"You don't think it's diphtheria?" Mrs. Morosi asked.

"Who's playing in Chicago?" Morosi demanded.

"Thomas always knew so many actresses," Mrs. Morosi added.

Verner went over the names of the productions, as well as he knew them, and of their principal actresses. Morosi listened to the recount frowningly, then shook his head.

"Do you suppose he could be ill?" he asked at length.

"Oh, I think not," said Verner, too easily, he realized, as Morosi turned his dark eyes once more upon him.

"What do you know that you are not telling me?" he asked.

"Nothing that I won't tell you before I go," he said.

Morosi nodded to his wife to ring the summons for the butler.

"I shall telephone the hotel in Chicago," he said. "Thomas should be there now."

"There's an hour's difference in time, you know," Mrs. Morosi reminded him.

Verner's fingers strayed toward his pocket, feeling for the telegram from Blake, as the butler came through the doorway, moving toward Morosi's wife.

"Mr. Carew has just come, madam," Verner heard him say. "Shall I set a place for him?"

"Certainly," she said, pointing toward the space at the other side of the table between Morosi and the vacant place, and beaming with a visible relief. "I was really afraid Tommy was ill," she said to Verner.

Morosi's dark eyes still brooded over the table. "Something's wrong," they seemed to shout to his guest, "and I'm going to find it out before you leave this room." Verner tried to signal back an insistence that his news boded no ill, but he looked over his shoulder furtively as he heard Tommy Carew's step through the drawing-room.

Something in the sound of the footsteps, some quality of determination ringing above a slight hesitation, struck upon Verner's sensitized hearing. He wondered if Morosi noted it, knowing how keenly awake to everything dramatically psychological the surgeon was; but Morosi seemed intent on watching the butler's swift movements in arranging Carew's place. He looked up only as Tommy Carew pushed aside

the black velvet portieres and moved across to greet Morosi's wife.

To Verner, Tommy Carew, standing above the woman in black velvet, came as a swift messenger of life into this splendid tomb. Not until the youth's glowing vitality suddenly radiated its warming waves did the Morosis' guest realize how clammily cold in human feeling had been this magnificent room that reflected Louis Morosi's personality with such triumphantly accurate effect. Within it Tommy Carew stood a young Hercules able and ready to rescue Alcestis. Mrs. Morosi gave to him a greeting that let a thawing relief slip from under the snows of her serenity. Morosi met him with his careful pose of poise, chilling, a little repellant. Verner tried to keep his anxiety about the boy out of his voice as he answered Tommy Carew's cordial words. The emotion flashed to his face however as Morosi asked sharply, "What's been the trouble in Chicago?"

Tommy Carew, passing from Verner to the place set for him next to his father-in-law, paused back of the chair at Amelia's place. His hand caught the ebony knob of its tall post as he pivoted around to face Morosi.

"There's been no trouble," he said, "but I might as well tell you now what I've travelled a thousand miles to say, I was married in Chicago yesterday morning."

Morosi's hand, lying clenched on the table, opened and closed, giving the only sign that he had heard Tommy Carew's words. Mrs. Morosi leaned a little forward, her lips parted, her grey eyes seeking Tommy's face.

"Who is she?" she asked.

"You don't know her," he said, "any of you. She's Margaret Dane. . . . I didn't know her till a week ago. . . . Her brother had been sent to interview me about a fool story his paper had, a story that you folks kept me in a sort of cloister. I explained to him how silly all that talk was. . . . Well, I liked her right away—the minute I met her—and she liked me, I guess. Anyway, I kept seeing her every minute I could,

and I made her marry me. I hope you'll like Margaret,"—his glance went to Mrs. Morosi, then faced back to the man of the etched profile at the head of the table—"although I know that I've brought her in the wrong way."

No one spoke. Tommy Carew's hand clutched more tightly the knob of the ebony chair. Mrs. Morosi stared straight ahead with a look that seemed to go a long way past the boy across the table. Then Morosi turned to Verner.

"You knew this?" he demanded.

"An hour ago," Verner said. "Blake wired me."

"I fancy," Morosi said, his words falling like the blows of a goldsmith's hammer, resonantly delicate, yet definitely certain, "that nothing I may say now will be of any use; but I think we deserved better from you, Mr. Carew, than you have given us. We have given you certain advantages that I will not now recount. All that we asked of you was loyalty to an ideal that we thought that you cherished as faithfully as we have. You have failed that and us. I think your failure severs all bonds between us." He turned back to Verner. "Do you like my Bordeaux?" he asked.

Tommy Carew's head went back.

"All right," he said, holding his voice low to keep it steady. "I'm going. There's just one thing I want to say, though, to set myself straight, not to you," he flared at Morosi, "but to you." He turned to Morosi's wife. "I want you to know that I loved Amelia and that her memory will be to me always the most beautiful thing in all my life. That she loved me was—just everything. I had my little bit of heaven. For three years I've been a lonely, despairing chap, and I'm human. When I met a girl who understood my loneliness, a good pal of a girl who'll give and take with me along the road, I knew just how lonely I'd been. I care for Margaret tremendously. She deserves more than I'll ever be able to give her. For down in my soul I shall go on loving Amelia to the day I die. I gave her the best thing in me. I shall always

give her that. But I can't give to the memory of any one what you ask me to give—every thought of my life. If God's let me live, I have to live my life my own way. I'm sorry to hurt you. You've always been good to me, and I'd hoped you'd understand. Good-bye."

He turned away and had gone as far as the curtains when Mrs. Morosi spoke. "Come back, Tommy," she said. He faced her, but he did not return. She looked at her husband, immobile, cold as the marble of the pillars. "I do understand," she said, "better than you know."

From beneath his finely arched white eyebrows Morosi gave her a dartingly questioning look. She returned it with a pride that revealed to Verner a new quality in her, the surety of a banished ruler who comes to the frontiers of her kingdom with a demand that she be brought back to her throne. She looked only at Morosi while she spoke.

"I think, Tommy," she said, "that you and I have both been sacrificed to the memory of Amelia. For myself I have been willing to be. I am growing old. I have had the best part of life. I have a husband. I have had a daughter. But you are young. You deserve happiness without blame. For my own part, I would never say what I shall have to say. Now for your sake, in order that you may know that you have done right, it is my duty to speak."

Tommy Carew, standing before the black curtains, stared at her wonderingly. Morosi, not looking up, toyed with his wine glass. Verner, uncomfortably conscious of his attendance upon this unexpected drama, nevertheless thrilled to the situation that Morosi's wife had twisted into the act with which her husband and her dead daughter's husband were ending their play. To Verner, the black and white room suddenly seemed to reflect some of that roseate glow that had been Amelia's, to lose that harsh and deathly severity that was Morosi's. Verner, trained by years of experience to apperception of big forces in conflict, felt a gripping con-

sciousness that life was fighting death here over the ebony table. The young Hercules had called Alcestis from her tomb, and Alcestis came forth to defend him from the toll that death demanded of him. Tensely Morosi's guest watched the man who had for years mastered the three of them now assembled in the room. Morosi maintained his pose of utter quiet as Mrs. Morosi, bending earnestly over the board, her arms outstretched on the polished surface, went on in her throbbing tones.

"There should be no need for me to explain," she was saying, "that Amelia was dearer to me than she could be to any one of you. You had so much in your life, Louis, that I could not have—so many interests, so much beauty, such vital action—that I was thrown back upon my child for compensation. She did compensate, too, for everything. While she was with me I asked nothing but her happiness. I think we should all be glad that she never had anything but happiness in her life. Even when she knew that she could hold life no longer she was happy in her going. She had seen enough of life outside to know that all lives were not as hers had always been, and she was grateful that she had never been called upon to suffer. She had been happy. She had made other people happy. It was a flower's life, a flower's mission, the living and the giving of beauty, that Amelia had. She was the most joyous, the most radiantly joy-giving girl in all the world. Was she not that?"

She turned to Verner and Verner nodded. Tommy Carew stood at the doorway. Morosi still toyed with his wine glass. His wife looked at him again as she resumed her deliberate speech.

"I know," she said, "that there was never a girl who so desired that the people she loved might be happy as Amelia wished it. It was her prayer from the time when she was a little girl. And here we are, the three of us whom she loved, the only people whom she did love, doing our best to make each other unhappy, and saying to ourselves that

it is for her sake. It isn't right, it isn't just, it isn't fair to her."

Morosi looked up at her consideringly. It was the look of a discerning manager for suddenly awakened qualities in a player. Tommy Carew came a step nearer to the table, his lips parted as if to express his sympathetic understanding for the viewpoint of Amelia's mother. Mrs. Morosi did not look his way. Her glowing grey eyes went back to Morosi.

"I know that you loved Amelia, Louis," she told him. "I used to think before Tommy came that there was a closer spiritual bond between Amelia and you than the one I had with her. It was after she and Tommy were married that Amelia and I came more closely together. Perhaps that is why I am kinder to Tommy than you are. He gave back to me, for a little while at least, the little girl I had lost to you. That was the only time when she was not all yours, Louis. You didn't know that you were selfish in your love for her. You didn't know that you were holding her away from everything except yourself and your interests. You thought when you let Tommy come into her life that you had done a splendid and a noble thing; and yet you did nothing but the duty any father owes to the child of his heart. And even then you didn't make the gift complete. You wouldn't let Amelia go out of your life to make her own. You brought Tommy into your life, too, and you managed it so well that Tommy believed, as Amelia believed, that your only thought was for her happiness."

"It was," said Morosi. His sombre eyes blazed. "I thought only for Amelia's comfort."

His wife watched him with a scrutiny that reminded Verner somehow of a painting he had once seen of a Recording Angel, a look that confronted Morosi's beliefs rather than his words.

"Yes," she said, "for her comfort. I said happiness. They aren't the same, Louis. But Amelia was happy, not be-

cause of your care, but in spite of it. She didn't stay long enough to realize how wrong it was. And then—and then—"

For the first time her voice broke. She put her hand over her mouth for a moment, then amid the silence of the three men she took up her words.

"I believe," she said, "that the best way of love is to remember the one who goes from us as he was in life. We all loved Amelia, but I know that I, her mother, loved her more than either one of you cared for her; and so I think my way of love is the best. Through these years I have fought and prayed to remember Amelia as my little girl of the happy heart. Tommy, too, has wanted to remember her as she was in the little time he knew her. But you, Louis, have tried to take her memory from us. You have covered the roses of her life with mourning. You have shut her away in a tomb, cold and dark, and you have set us within the tomb lest we should forget her. You have told me sometimes that we owed the duty of memory to our dead. You have chided me when I dared to speak of the rights of the living. But to-night I am telling you of the rights of the dead, Amelia's rights with us. She has the right to be remembered in death as she was in life, a giver of happiness and not a destroyer of it. Can't you see what Amelia would have done if she could but know that Tommy's happiness was in any way dependent upon her? Wouldn't she want him to be happy? Can't you see that, Louis?"

She bent across the table toward her husband. He stared at her with that same curiously intent gaze of probing, but Verner, who had watched Louis Morosi's mental processes for many years, knew that somehow, by some method not of words, Morosi's wife had scored her point. She did not know it, for she arose from her chair and went across the room toward Tommy Carew.

"Is—is Margaret in New York?" she asked him.

"Yes," he said.

"Take me to her," she told him.

He stepped ahead to draw back the curtains for her. Morosi arose.

"Bring her back with you, Thomas," he said.

As the black velvet curtain fell behind the woman and the boy, Louis Morosi sank back into his chair. More than ever a sharply drawn etching he seemed to Verner as he sat watching the ebony chair behind which Tommy Carew had stood, the chair that Amelia had been wont to fill. With Tommy Carew and Mrs. Morosi had gone that roseate glow that had seemed to il-

lumine the room for a brief time with the reflection of the girl whom they had, in their own ways, loved so well. Morosi's fingers closed on the wine glass. He was lifting it as the butler came back.

"Hereafter," he gave the order, "you will not set my daughter's place."

Sombrely he watched the man go out. Then he rose again, holding high his glass.

"For the first time," he said to Verner, "Amelia is all my own. To her memory!"

He drank. Then he sent the glass crashing to the floor.



THE PARABLE OF THE RED FLAG

A SOCIALIST, carrying a red flag, marched through the gates of Heaven. "To hell with rank!" he shouted. "All men are equal here!" Just then the late Karl Marx turned a corner and came into view, meditatively stroking his whiskers. At once the Socialist fell upon his knees and touched his forehead to the dust. "O Master!" he cried. "O Master, Master, Master!"



GIRL

By Robert Carlton Brown

GIRL! I'll take you for a tonic.
 Doctors shall never get me
 As long as you're around.
 Girl! I'll take a long draught
 Of you
 To quicken my spirit
 And make me vibrate with life.



ROOSTERS crow, hens cackle, men brag. Women insist on church weddings.



AN ECHO

By Herbert Allan

IT is as yesterday. By my side is the coachman's daughter, a bright, laughing little fairy with curls of spun gold, eyes that match the bluest corners of the sky, and a skin that is as soft as thistle-down. She is at the mature age of twelve. I—I—am thirteen. My face is very freckled, my hands hard, full of splinters, and grossly scarred by unfortunate endeavors with my new knife—in short, I am particularly homely. Add to this my ungainliness—we are all clumsy at thirteen—and you may form some idea of my appearance.

We are seated down by the barn in deepest shadow. Above us the nascent moon sends forth searching rays that threaten to discover us at any moment; but we do not care—we are not yet sophisticated enough to be self-conscious. We alone exist, for the present. I reach forward and touch her tresses.

"What pretty hair you have, Mary."

"Really." Giggle. "I don't believe you think so at all."

"Honest I do, Mary. It's bee-ewtiful."

A groping hand. A firm clasp on mine.

"Your hair is nice too, Billy."

"Not as nice as yours."

Silence. The moon rises higher—its rays are almost at our feet, now. They make a silver tongue of each blade of grass, a diamond of each new-born dew-drop.

Mary giggles again. I am curious and inquire:

"What are you laughing at?"

"Oh nothing—I just laughed."

"But something must have made you laugh."

"Well—if you must know everything—my foot tickles."

I bend forward to examine the offending member and notice, with a shock, that Mary is bare-footed. The eternal mystery of nudity has me in its grip. Her flesh is so smooth and firm and pink—above the ankle where the rim of black dust ceases. There are vague stirrings in my heart. Without knowing why, I move closer to her.

"Will you marry me?" I ask softly.

"Oh Silly," answers Mary who has practical ideas in her little head, "what would we live on?"

I am vague, but determined.

"Anything."

She is scornful now.

"But you can't eat 'anything'."

I bow to her superior wisdom. I am crushed. Silence. A bright idea flashes across my brain.

"I'll sell my pony. We can live on that. I can get almost a hundred dollars for him."

The triumph of the male! I am a bread-winner at last. She smiles ecstatically and says:

"Yes Billy—if you sell your pony I'll marry you."

Slowly, timidly, my arm creeps around her waist. My muscles tighten and clasp her tightly to my side. My head turns until my lips are directly opposite hers. She pouts for a moment—then puckers. We kiss. . . .

* * *

Many years have passed since then—yet it is as yesterday. What ever became of Mary, God knows. But am I an egotist when I say that I have had one moment of real happiness in my life?

YOUNG MR. BOBBINS DECIDES

By Lee Pape

YOUNG Mr. Bobbins was really deeply in love: his heart was divided between two young women. He had begun this particular morning by deciding, once and for all, to lay his hand and both halves of his heart on Miss Margaret Carroll's side of the nicely balanced scale. But lunchtime's hollow approach had brought distracting memories of certain savoury occasions on which Miss Wanda Laylor had conjured wonders out of a chafing dish, and once more Peggy, the plump, and Wanda, the willowy, poised even on the hair balance of love.

"I got to decide. I simply *got to*," Bobbins thought helplessly as he re-wound some blue taffeta and stared unseeingly after the huffily retreating little woman who had failed to make him promise that it wouldn't fade.

The fact was, Bobbins' Aunt Jennie May, who during her life had whiled away most of her spinster hours back home reading novels devoted to proving the proposition that where love is not, nothing is, had left a real story-book will. Bobbins was to come in for her bank balance of \$2,000 providing he had got himself engaged or married by his twenty-second birthday.

And Bobbins was within three days of twenty-two!

"I got to decide!" he kept repeating to his lunch of corned beef hash. . . . Peggy's laugh was compounded of the stuff o' dreams; Wanda had a smile that warmed like wine. When Bobbins was with Peggy the music of her laugh gurgled almost continuously—every time that Bobbins said anything good. And when he was with Wanda her unfailing smile of appreciation fired him

to intellectual heights and kept him glowing inside like a man to whom nothing is impossible—

"Penny for your thoughts, Mr. Bobbins!" rallied his landlady at supper. (He had been staring as though the chip of ice in his glass were a crystal-gazer's ball.)

"I got to decide!" muttered young Mr. Bobbins resolutely. . . . "Oh—nothing." . . . Peggy's chin was tipped with a dimple that flashed out to hear every time she laughed, peeping and vanishing like the farthest star of early evening; Wanda had a storage battery way of accidentally brushing her hand against yours, and when you danced with her she made you feel like Vernon Castle by following all your mistakes, as it were, in perfect time—

"I'll toss up!" decided Bobbins desperately as he was brushing his hair after supper. Not that he hadn't brushed it before supper, but he was to take Miss Carroll and her mother to see Mary Pickford "Married in Haste" in four parts that evening, and the most tractable of hair won't lie straight back without frequent coaxing.

Bobbins sat on the edge of his bed and balanced a dime on the nail of a slightly trembling thumb.

"One toss," he carefully explained to it. "Heads, Peggy. Tails, Wanda." He flipped it, caught it. Heads.

"Ah," breathed Bobbins. . . . "I'll do it to-night. Wonder what her mother's like?"

For Bobbins had never seen Miss Carroll's mother, although she was to be his guest that evening. When Bobbins, leaning gingerly across the perfumery counter, over whose stoppered

mysteries Miss Carroll presided, offered the moving picture suggestion, Miss Carroll had exclaimed, "You bet you I do! But to-morrow night—oh, Harry, mother'll be in town. Will it be all right if—"

"Sure!" assented Bobbins promptly. "Any mother of yours is welcome, any time."

And Miss Carroll had giggled playfully, "Oh, Harry! This is so sudden!"

True, she might not have meant anything, but both Miss Carroll and Miss Laylor were apt to make that kind of "little remarks." That was one reason why Bobbins, who was really an astute young man, felt confident that in either case the lady stood waiting, a feminine Barkis.

Miss Laylor, who took seven dollars' worth of dictation and bad temper from a crusty old lawyer each week, was Miss Carroll's particular friend, for the young women claimed a common home town and were, each for the other, perfect beauty foils. Miss Laylor lived at the home of an aunt, just around the corner from Mrs. Seever's boarding house, where in due time (about twenty minutes to eight) Bobbins reported that evening and inquired for Miss Carroll.

He sat on the red and springy upholstery of Mrs. Seever's miniature parlor, gazing with intent coldness at the familiar tinted photograph of the late Mr. Seever which graced two square feet of the opposite wall, until Miss Carroll ushered in her mother. After Peggy had murmured identities, they shook hands—Mrs. Carroll had quite a grip—and eyed each other. Mrs. Carroll eyed Bobbins merely with that quick sharpness with which any mother takes first stock of any young man in whom her daughter is interested. But Bobbins eyed Mrs. Carroll with the larger interest of a young man who contemplated doing her the honor of becoming her son-in-law.

To say the least, Mrs. Carroll was plump. To say the most she—but the least said the better. At any rate, Mrs.

Carroll had a double chin, and when she moved at her wonted pace, the resultant locomotion was not strictly a walk. But what gave Bobbins a real start at that first fair eyeing-up was that she had eyes of blue, a blue so radiant that it seemed to throw a lighter blue reflection all about the lower lids—eyes that Bobbins had fondly fancied her daughter Peggy possessed alone of all the world.

This discovery kept him silent all the way to the moving picture theatre, or at least until Miss Carroll, giving him a little jab with the elbow of the arm that rested within his, remarked, "You're not yourself to-night, Harry. Ma, he's usually the killingest thing!"

"Give him time," said Mrs. Carroll. "Rome wasn't built in a day."

And indeed, under the influence of that subtly affectionate jab and the music of his own first name on Miss Carroll's lips, Bobbins soon brightened. Miss Laylor, too, often gave him just such intimate little pokes, and she also knew how to sound "Harry" so as to start that same tickling thrill. Bobbins, though not unmodest, knew what was back of it—they didn't *have* to say it that way! And now suddenly, with almost a jerk, he remembered.

"This is the big night," he thought. "Wonder if she'll leave us alone long enough?" He pressed the plump little arm on his forearm, and it turned until its palm met his and returned the pressure with interest.

"She loves me, all right," thought Bobbins.

He sat, in the theatre, between mother and daughter. Under cover of the perpetual moving picture dusk he found Miss Carroll's hand, but after a little time a shaft of light, springing upon them from a suddenly opened door, caused him to drop it. The same shaft of light picked Mrs. Carroll's face for an instant out of the gloom—only for an instant, but long enough to show Bobbins something that made him gasp as though for air.

Mrs. Carroll was smiling at something on the screen. It was a large

smile—to an impersonal observer, a jolly smile, but to Bobbins it was a paralyzing contortion surrounding an infinitesimal depression: a staggeringly exact reproduction of Peggy's dimple, Peggy's heart-quickenning, will-o'-the-wisp dimple that Bobbins had sworn had not its mate this side of heaven. In that second of light, Bobbins stared at it, fascinated.

And now it all was dark once more, and Bobbins could feel Peggy's hand edging along the arm of his seat to be taken again. He let it edge for a full half minute before he made a show of recapturing it.

After Little Mary had kissed the right man in the final dissolving scene, and the audience had risen for its formless exodus, Bobbins remarked, "Well, ladies, I move we go and have a bite to eat."

"Second the motion, thank you," replied Miss Carroll.

"I'm agreeable," said her mother. "Hunger is the best appetizer."

The human stream was moving sluggishly to the doors, and as Bobbins watched a young woman at his side violently straighten her hat and remark to a strange young man with jutting shoulders, "Take it with you or have it sent?" a cross current making for a side "exit" managed to separate him from his guests. While he was craning his neck rather wildly, he heard a sound—an unmistakable sound, like the softest blending of rippling water and far away silver bells. Bobbins pushed toward it through the crowd and laid his hand on Miss Carroll's shoulder.

"I heard you laugh," he explained.

"That was me," said Mrs. Carroll.

Again Bobbins fell silent, and the three wended their way to the "Vienna Lunch."

"What's on your mind, Harry?" asked Miss Carroll finally.

"Hair," replied Bobbins moodily. "Are you sure that wasn't you laughed in the theatre?"

"I am. I'd like to know what I'd have to laugh at with you around! You're a funeral to-night."

"It was me all right," said Mrs. Carroll. "Tell me what you laugh at and I'll tell you what you are."

They strolled on. . . .

"Ma, you'd never believe how killing he can be when he wants to," Miss Carroll observed as she watched Bobbins silently dissecting his deviled crab.

Her mother was too busy to make articulate answer. She had a terrific appetite, Bobbins thought as he watched her requisitioning most of the bread and making forays on Peggy's butter. Peggy was picking daintily, as usual, and yet there was something about Mrs. Carroll's eating that reminded Bobbins of her daughter. He didn't know what, exactly, but there was something.

On the rather silent homeward walk, Peggy kept darting wondering, troubled, half understanding glances at Bobbins' thoughtful face. Mrs. Carroll, beyond remarking twice that her feet hurt something awful, did not offer to make conversation. Suddenly Bobbins turned to her.

"You must 'a' been the living image of Peggy when you was her age," he said.

"Like as two peas," replied Mrs. Carroll complacently.

There was a silence for perhaps two seconds, and then Peggy cried passionately, "No, ma, no!"

"Why, yes, child, yes!" retorted her mother in surprise. "Haven't we got the photographs to prove it, and hasn't amazement been expressed times without number when our two pictures was placed side by side? When your Uncle Samuel saw me this afternoon wasn't it his very remark that when he first looked at me he could 'a' imagined it was you walking in on him twenty years from now? What do you mean by 'No, ma, no'?"

"Nothing," replied Peggy, almost under her breath. Then her hands clenched. "There may be a resemblance, but—nothing, ma."

"You talk queer," said Mrs. Carroll.

As it happened, Mrs. Carroll did leave them alone long enough. She took great pains to crowd past her

daughter as Peggy was opening the front door with her key, remarking, "Well, tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep. I'll leave you two young people to say good night. Mr. Bobbins, I thank you for a very pleasant evening."

"Mutual, 'm sure," murmured Bobbins, gazing steadily at her. She closed the door, all but an inch, and her steps were heard ascending stairs.

"It's early," faltered Peggy. "Won't you step in for a few minutes, Harry?"

Bobbins looked at her, and, as he looked, Time lifted twenty years from between them; her face grew broad and without uniformity of outline, her mouth connected two outstanding semi-circular lines of cheek and the dimple in her chin marked the boundary line where another chin began. . . .

Bobbins held out his hand.

"No, thanks," he said. "I—I got to get up early. They're furnishing a ribbon window and they want me to help."

Peggy took his hand with only a sigh; then, after watching him a little way

down the street, she slowly closed the door.

Bobbins, with swinging strides, took a circuitous way home, "to cool off," as he mentally phrased it, although the evening was almost chilly. He took a route that led past the home of Miss Laylor's aunt. As luck would have it, he caught Miss Laylor returning from a trip to the mail box. As they met in the dark street, Bobbins was repeating to himself: "Two days more, two days more."

Hatless there, under the mystic light of a lamp-post, smiling, slender, she breathed his name.

"It's early," said Bobbins abruptly. "How about a little walk through the square and then I'll bring you back home?"

"Lovely!" She hesitated. "Won't you come in first and meet mother? She and Mrs. Carroll came to town together this afternoon."

Bobbins drew her arm firmly through his.

"Take the walk first," he said. "I'll meet your mother—afterwards."



THE MERRY MEN

By John McClure

I LOVE the farce men—
Bien heureux est qui rien n'y a!—
 They that go skipping
 With light laughter
 Bound to no woman,
 They that are as goats
 In the world,
 Knowing not sadness.
 I love the farce men—
Bien heureux est qui rien n'y a!



THE WISE MAN

By Harry Kemp

ONCE upon a time, not so very long ago, either, there lived, in a splendidly furnished mansion, a man who set himself up as excelling in wisdom and understanding all his fellow men. He maintained his exalted position in life through the fees he charged for his advice.

And he alleged three reasons as to why he was competent to advise others, and as to why he surpassed others in understanding.

1. He had never succeeded in any project that he had ever undertaken.

2. He had never assumed any of the obligations of love.

3. He had a beard with greyness in it.

Hence, people, being very logical, acknowledged his claims as just, and they thronged to his habitation in multitudes, seeking advice for that conduct in life which led to success.

Now, among these multitudes there came to the Wise Man three Men of Genius—A Poet, A Musician, and A Painter—all youths who shared the bitterness of their poverty together in an attic which was located in an obscure quarter of the Great City.

Each one of these was inwardly persuaded that he would some day be great and famous, and each was at odds with the slowness of his destiny.

Be it said, also, that these young men had already exceeded the warrant of their youth in tangible achievement.

They paid the Wise Man the fee,

to accumulate which they had taken in their belts several eye-holes tighter. Then they bowed before him, awaiting his decision.

"It is plain," said he, "that none of you know aught about life. Now the true artist, if he would become great, must first of all learn about the world in which he lives . . . hence you," turning to the Poet, "should go forth and observe men and women in the midst of their sorrows and joys, their hopes and fears and daily travail."

"And you," turning to the Musician, "should go forth among men and listen to their voices, at work or at rest. You should hear the lover holding converse with his sweetheart, and buyers higgling in the market place, and young men singing alone or in company. And you should learn the cadences of sledges on anvils, the noises of great cities, the voices of Nature in field and wood.

"And you," he said to the Painter, "you should fall in love. Love will add warmth and richness of color to your canvases."

So all three went forth rejoicing.

A year from that day the Wise Man was found lying dead, in his consultation room, with two knife-thrusts through his heart.

The Poet, coming back, had thrust him through, because, having seen life, he was now weighed down with the multifariousness and sorrow of it, so that the single clear voice of his lyric Muse no longer sang for him. . . .

And the Musician could no longer compose or play, because, whenever he would put down a melody, anguish and

anvils rang in his ears, and handling lumber and sledges had stiffened his fingers, thereby ruining his delicate touch. . . .

But the saddest case of all was that of the Painter. . .

He had fallen in love. He had married. A child had been born. And now he was drawing the heads of

pretty girls for the covers of popular magazines. . . .

He it was who had not supplied what should have been the third and deepest knife-thrust.

He had had to forswear his part of a just revenge.

For before he did anything now he had to think of his Family first.



TWENTY-ONE

By Richard Florance

IT is a night I love,
It has come so softly and quietly
Over the hills.
This wind that I smell
Is cold with flowers and trees—
And the wind is warm
With smooth, broad roads and hurrying motors
And restless people.
The year is blossoming
Along the highroad to a city.

So was the wind
Years ago.
I ran across a lawn
And caught my love;
And in the moonlight
Her face was like a flower in the wind.
She had been hiding from me, and we laughed.

Now I am old,
And important in a dinner coat. . . .
If only in the moonlight,
When no one saw,
I might run across the lawn
To kiss my love!



MEN and women are very different. In the moonlight a man thinks of love, a woman of marriage.



THE GIRL WHO READ BEST-SELLERS

By Albert Payson Terhune

FESTUS RAGNAR had much money, many years and most wisdom. He had left his mark on the world; and the world had returned the compliment with usury.

Maurice Ragnar was his grandson. Festus had had charge of the orphaned child from babyhood. He used to say Maurice was his life-work. And he looked on the work with a creator's pride.

For, he had set his stamp on the young fellow. With the result that Maurice had been brought up as the average decent man would bring up a son; if the average decent man knew how.

At twenty-five, he was wondrously clean and normal and good to look upon. Not a prodigy in any way; but the kind of youngster to whom one's heart warms, as to a thoroughbred horse or a perfect dog.

Old Festus Ragnar had been the darling of crinolined damsels and the despairing envy of stocked and flowered-waistcoated swains in the days when New York stopped short at Twenty-third street; and when no one thought of going uptown for the simple reason that there was no uptown to go to. When green fields and straggling woods stretched unbroken from Herald Square to remote Harlem Village.

Then, when an ugly, ill-fitting garment of brick and stone and asphalt had begun to creep farther and farther northward along lean Manhattan Island, blotting out Nature with flat-houses and green lanes with roaring streets, Festus Ragnar had still grasped and held some of the stately charm of the dead days. And it was with him yet; despite his

eighty-odd years. Very old he was and very fragile; and all the wisdom of the centuries seemed to glow behind his tired black eyes.

Because of his grandsire's teachings, there was a breath of this charm clinging to Maurice, too. And it had a way of serving him, where mere wit and magnetism would have failed. Thanks, also, to his grandfather, Maurice had access to the smartest set. The big, ugly brown house of the Ragnars, now downtown, had once been a center of local gaieties. That had been a full half century ago. Now, a few cautiously selected people came there to very staid and very semi-occasional dinners or antique receptions. These guests were a trifle ill at ease—perhaps bored—yet they angled strenuously for further invitations. For there was a *cachet* on these affairs—as on the dreary old salons of the Faubourg St. Germain at which Napoleon's custom-made aristocrats scoffed and to which they vainly yearned for ingress.

Maurice Ragnar was twenty-five; not eighty-five. And he was living in the present. For him there was no past. So, while he duly appeared at all his grandfather's solemn social functions, he also wandered far afield into jollier if less zealously guarded pastures. And it was on one of these ventures that he met Hilda Barham.

* * *

Hilda was a girl who could, and did, receive invitations to houses where her perfectly worthy and plumply wealthy parents would scarce have been admitted through the tradesmen's entrance. There are such girls. For the rest, she was pretty; as well educated as anyone

can hope to be who has learned solely at school and whose home training has perforce been wiped out, instead of supplemented, by study.

She was what people used to call "a girl of the period." She prided herself on her knowledge of life, its chances, its pitfalls, its secrets. She knew almost everything. And what she did not know, she suspected.

Yes, she knew life. She knew it from tomes that were as good as textbooks. Not from such moss-brained dodoes as Balzac, Thackeray and the like, who understood human nature only as it was in their own primitive time and before the world changed—but from such present-day masters as Robert W. Chambers, Gouverneur Morris, Owen Johnson, Elizabeth Robins, Reginald Wright Kauffman, and the rest of the new masters; who show life—sex-life, above all—as it really is. Yes, and from plays written by modernists of equal rank. Plays too bad to fail; too good to die young.

Maurice Ragnar was charmed with Hilda. She was so unlike the daughters and the granddaughters of his grandfather's friends; and so altogether wonderful and appealing. And, because in all his days he had kept no secret from Festus, he came to the old man with the story of his dawning love.

Festus heard him out; the tired and wise old black eyes watching him unblinkingly from under their snow-thatch, as he talked; the myriad-lined old face expressionless save for a mildly courteous interest.

"Why," the boy babbled at last, "sometimes she makes me feel almost—almost holy! Last evening, for instance. I wanted to take her home from the Bradfords' in my car. Her maid had forgotten the time she was to come for her. So I asked her to let me get her home. I was half afraid she wouldn't; she's so particular about such things. But when I got up courage enough to ask, she just looked at me with those glorious innocent eyes of hers and then she said: 'Of course I'll let you take me home. You see, I

trust you perfectly, Mr. Ragnar.' Wasn't that—?"

"Said—said she 'trusted you perfectly,' hey?" rasped the old man, breaking in on his grandson's blissful maunderings. "Lord!"

"I beg your pardon, sir?" said Maurice, bewildered.

For a long thirty seconds, Festus said nothing. Then, the rasp in his voice changing to annoyance, he answered:

"My dear boy, I tried not to bring you up to be a *roturier*—'rounder,' I believe is this generation's refined term for it. But neither did I bring you up as Parsifal the Guileless Fool. At least," he corrected himself with painful effort at accuracy, "I tried not to."

"I don't understand," said Maurice.

"That is just the trouble. You don't understand. Yet I should have thought Instinct might have told you. If you inherit any of it from me. Which I have liked to hope you may."

"Instinct?"

"Or common sense," amended Festus. "I have lived more than three times as long as you. In all that time I have never been able to understand women. Nor could I, if I should live another century or so. But, by making earnest use of my few heaven-sent opportunities, I have annexed certain minor bits of information about them. Perhaps not more than a paltry half-million facts out of a possible trillion. Nothing to boast of, as you see. Yet useful, at times. And this appears to be one of those times."

"I'm afraid, sir," put in Maurice, "that I don't understand you at all. Won't you please explain what this has to do with—?"

"Everything to do with it. I thought your education was finished. I see it is not yet begun. As you cannot start to learn, any earlier in life, let me teach you, here and now, one of the most vital of the half-million scraps of knowledge I have bought—and paid for—concerning women."

He looked at the frankly puzzled face before him, and his hard old eyes soft-

ened. Speaking as if to a loved but slightly defective child, he said:

"Maurice, when a woman—*any* woman, from cradle to grave—volunteers the statement: 'I trust you, perfectly,' you may be absolutely sure she doesn't trust you at all."

"Grandfather!"

"When you were a child and came to kiss me good night, did it ever occur to you to say: 'I'm not afraid to kiss you. I know I can trust you not to bite my ear off'? You trusted me. And the person who really trusts, doesn't say 'I trust you.' It doesn't occur to him to say it. The boy who whistles, going through a dark hall, isn't whistling because he is happy. He is whistling because he is scared and because if he didn't whistle, he might cry. The person who doesn't trust, insists that he *does* trust, on the same principle."

"But—"

"It is like the blackleg who feels it needful to say: 'I am an honest man.' You never heard a really honest man say that. And, it is the same with women as with men. Women are human, just as much as men are. I have heard it denied. But they are. My experience has taught me so. Nearly always. When this Miss Barham feels she must tell you she trusts you, it is a certain sign she does not. Or else she is posing. Or she is in the same boat with the cur who says to a woman: 'You are as safe with me as if—'"

"You are wrong, sir! You're entirely mistaken. She—"

"I know. Old age is always mistaken. The fruit of Experience is crass Ignorance. Shall we let it rest that way?"

"As you choose, sir!" said Maurice, stiffly; and the subject was dropped.

* * *

The younger man did not know that between him and Festus Ragnar had begun for the first time the world-old duel between Youth and Age. But his grandfather knew it; even as he knew most things. And the knowledge left him sick at heart and raging.

Love of woman had come between him and the boy whom he adored. It was the inevitable tragedy; and it was doubly tragic because of the estimate that Festus had formed of this particular woman.

Meanwhile, Hilda Barham was finding Maurice a growingly delightful companion. In looks, in manner, in devotion, he was scarce second to one of her literary mentors' heroes. If his talk did not sparkle as did theirs, it was at least more thrillingly personal.

With the wisdom of her reading, Hilda had learned not to hold herself cheap nor to let Maurice regard her so. She knew that all men, be they ever so square with one another, are incipient scoundrels where women are concerned; and that only when they find that all other means must fail, do they suggest holy wedlock. Wherefore, though her heart cried out against the idiocy of her brain, she stood vigilantly and ceaselessly on guard.

Then came the automobile trip to Monroe. A party of twenty people were motoring out for the week-end at a castle-like country house there. It was only a short three-hour run from Fort Lee ferry. And Maurice had begged Hilda to go thither in his car.

She had been over the route once or twice before. Mentally she reviewed the journey: State roads all the way; flocks of other cars going and coming; as public a thoroughfare by daylight as Fifth Avenue itself. And she consented.

It was ten o'clock in the morning when she and Maurice chugged up the Palisades grade on "first speed." It was twelve when they came to Central Valley where the roads branch; one going to the right toward Newburgh, the other, leftward, to Monroe.

To Hilda's surprise, Maurice steered into the right-hand road.

"You've taken the wrong turn," she told him.

He laughed. To her, there was something sinister in the seemingly light-hearted boyishness of the sound; something even more than suspicious.

"Turn back," she said, "you're on the wrong road."

"I know I am," he answered. "I'm kidnapping you."

And he laughed again. Hilda had always liked his laugh. Now, it worried her. Glancing at the girl, he saw the vague trouble in her eyes, and he hurried on to say:

"There's a cross-road just a few miles to the north. It runs along the ridge and comes out above Monroe. The view from the summit is glorious. And, besides, there's a house on the very crest that I want you to see. And someone at the house, that I want still more to see *you*, if you don't mind."

"But I *do* mind," she protested. "We are due at Monroe at one o'clock. And—"

"And we ought to get there by that time or earlier. This little car is a wonder at climbing hills. It'll sail over the ridge like a scenic railway scow over the dips. You won't mind the detour, will you? As I said, I want you to see the house. And someone moved into the house *only* yesterday for the summer. Someone you *must* meet. Please!"

He seemed so childishly eager, so delighted at the little adventure; that she momentarily let her heart gain sway over her textbook lore.

"All right," she agreed, gaily. "I will consent to be kidnapped and borne to the robber castle. You see," she continued, with disarming simplicity, "I trust you, Maurice."

For an instant, the gladness of his face dimmed. And, not hearing as did he, a rasping old voice raised in supercilious exhortation, she wondered at the change in his expression. But even as she wondered, it gave place to a look she had learned to love; a look such as shines only in the eyes of the Divinely Idiotic.

Their talk recommenced. And presently they turned in upon the ridge road.

"Who did you say lives up here?" she queried.

"I didn't say," he retorted. "It's a dark secret."

The car grumbled and thumped resentfully, as its tires left the amecite and smote the ruts of the hill. But gallantly it took the rise; its engine pumping hotly, like the heart of a tired runner.

Up and up soared the little French car; until momentum and strength slackened, and the whirr of "first speed" sounded. The rest was labor—grinding labor and slowness, as the machine pluckily bucked the thank-you-ma'ams and the steep pitches of grade.

The road's surroundings grew wilder, too. For hours the car had glided along a highway devoted to pleasure and speed traffic; a thoroughfare lined with villages, country houses and man-fashioned lawns and groves, with stretches of open country under cultivation or else arranged as prim parks. The wilderness had been made to blossom like the Fifth Proposition of Euclid.

But here the man and girl were all at once in a world that was virgin of the benign influences of commuter, developer and landscape artist. A country road in the old sense; winding upward through untrimmed woods and rock pastures, bordered by dusty sumac, briar and wild grape, a narrow, snake-like road scarce better than a lane. A road where any adventure, from a skunk to a holdup, was quite highly possible.

Hilda Barham waxed nervous. She had no fear of holdups. But, none the less, she was afraid. Increasingly so. All at once, she realized that she was alone, beyond reach of help, on a desolate mountain, with a man who had made no secret of his longing for her. A man who—who—*had her in his power!*

She shuddered a little, involuntarily. And she drew farther into her own part of the seat. Absorbed as he was in the feat of piloting his car up the winding hill, Maurice felt the shiver; and he asked in quick concern:

"Are you cold? There's another rug

just behind you. Wait till we get around this corner and I'll reach it for you."

"I'm not cold," she returned, in a somewhat stifled voice.

He didn't speak again. The car was taking all his attention. The engine, for some occult reason, was beginning to "miss." Hilda found his silence ominous. She stole a sidelong glance at his face. It was set and hard. On it was a look she had never seen there; a look as of saturnine resolve. He was counting the engine-beats and wondering worriedly if the men at the garage had remembered to put fresh water into the radiator.

The road grew wilder. Dense forests now penned it in on either side. Hilda felt a thousand miles away from human aid.

"Do you think," she forced herself to ask, her lips dry, "that we're likely to meet anyone along here?"

"I hope to heaven we don't!" he muttered, devoutly—or diabolically—as he scanned the narrow leeway to either side of the car and the depth of the roadside ditches. "That's what I'm counting on. I wouldn't have brought you here if there was any great chance of meeting other people. There! We're at the top at last," he broke off, as the final rise was feebly breasted and conquered by the stuttering engine; and the woods stretched level alongside of them instead of at an acute angle. "And now—" reaching toward the rug that was behind her back.

She shrank in fear from the supposed embrace, white and shaking. Before he could ask why, the car stopped. It stopped dead. The ailing engine had struck work for the day.

With a half-articulate growl of impatience, Maurice jumped out of the car and turned to help Hilda descend. She sat, petrified, staring dully at him. The worst had happened. The very worst. The thing she had begun to dread. The thing she had told herself *could* not happen. Here, on this wooded, desolate mountain top—

"The engine has gone out of busi-

ness," he was saying to the terror-deaf girl. "I'm an awful duffer at fixing things. I'd only make it worse if I should try to tinker with it. The house isn't more than a furlong away. Just around the bend. I'll send one of the men to see what's the trouble. If worst comes to worst, we can get another car, there. Come!"

For all the sense his words conveyed to her, he might have been speaking Syriac. She noted only that his face was flushed and that his eyes were on hers in imperative appeal. Also that he was stretching his hand toward her.

She shook off his light touch from her wrist and, standing up in the car, recoiled against the farther door.

"You brute!" she blazed, her throat sanded with horror.

Maurice Ragnar's jaw dropped and his eyes fairly bulged.

"Hilda!" he gasped.

"Don't touch me!" she commanded. "Let me go, I say."

"Hilda!" he cried again. "What on earth is the matter? Are you ill?"

He caught her hand in distress. She wrenched it away.

"Let me go!" she repeated, almost in a shriek. "Do you think I don't understand? Do you think I didn't suspect, from the moment we turned into this horrible road? I was waiting every moment for you to stop the car—"

"Stop the car?" he echoed bewildered. "The car has stopped itself. If you wanted me to stop it sooner, you had only to say so. I—"

"Oh!"

"Please, *please* tell me what is the matter?" he begged. "You are suffering. And I can't bear to have you suffer. You see—I love you, dear. I didn't mean to say that, yet. But it's true. The truest thing in all this world. And I can't have you frightened or unhappy. I *can't*. Tell me what the matter is!"

He put one foot on the running-board and held out his arms to her. She shrieked aloud. To avoid him she threw herself violently against the car-door behind her. The latch was inse-

cure, and the half-hasped door flew open.

Grasping the edge of the windshield, to keep herself from falling, Hilda jumped out into the roadside dust, on the far side of the car from Maurice. Then, before he could stay her or rouse himself from his daze of blank dismay, she had broken into a run.

* * *

Along the road she fled, in panic-terror; hearing Maurice's frantic calls to her and the pad-pad-pad of his feet on the rutted track behind her. The sound lent fresh speed to her feet. Around the bend she dashed.

In front of her she saw a big rambling house of undoubted Colonial date; set well back in its own well-tended grounds; the unbroken forest running up to the lawn on three sides. And, strolling down the narrow road, between her and the house, a man was coming toward her.

He was dressed all in white, from buckskin shoes to Panama. And his hair was as white as his flannel coat. He was very very old; and he walked slowly; helping himself along with an ivory-crook cane. At his heels lounged a fluffy and elderly collie.

At sight of the fleeing girl, the old man stopped short. So did the collie; hesitant whether to wag a welcome or growl a "no thoroughfare!" warning. At her first glimpse of the man, Hilda cried out again and redoubled her speed.

Rushing up to him, she caught him frantically by both coat lapels.

"Help me!" she panted; contrasting, in her mind, his aged fragility with the strength of her pursuer. "Help me!"

She glanced at the dog; recalling tales of collies' heroic devotion to people in distress. At that instant, as though in answer to her thought, the dog burst into a paroxysm of noisy barking and bounded past her.

Maurice Ragnar had rounded the bend and was hurrying toward them. And at the advancing Maurice, the collie launched its furry bulk. Hilda held her laboring breath, to witness the

climax of brute vengeance upon a brute.

Straight at Maurice flew the dog. Maurice paid no heed; made no move to guard himself from the attack; but hurried toward her; calling something as he ran.

And now the great dog was upon him. Literally, upon him; leaping up against the running man in an ecstasy of excitement; barking clamorously; licking Maurice's hands, striving to spring high enough to lick his cheek.

"Down, Wolf!" ordered Maurice impatiently, as he almost tripped over the madly welcoming animal.

Then, the dog still capering about him, he came to a halt in front of the girl and the wholly unperturbed old man.

"What is the matter, dear?" he cried, imploringly, to Hilda. "Why did you run away from me like that? I—"

"Good morning, Maurice," broke in the old gentleman's dry voice. "You seem to know this young lady. May I ask you to introduce me to her? If only for her own convenience," he went on, "For she may feel less embarrassed at clinging to the neck of a man she has met than to a total stranger's. I merely suggest it."

Hilda, aware for the first time, of her unconventional posture, released his coat lapels, in confusion, and stepped back; looking from one to the other of the two men. It began to dawn on her that she was in the presence of the great Festus Ragnar, of whom she had heard all her life.

How he chanced to have arisen from the ground, in the nick of time, for her rescue, at a point eighty miles from his home, she did not stop to ask herself. Enough that he was there; and that she was safe. Reaction left her weak and dizzy.

As from far off, she heard Maurice stammer an introduction, and she noted the marvelous old-world bow with which Festus acknowledged it. She did not note the tensing of his lean jaw-muscles as he heard her name. But she did hear him say, very quietly and

authoritatively to Maurice, as she tried to speak:

"Go to the garage and send someone for the car. Then come to the veranda in fifteen minutes. Not sooner."

Maurice hesitated, glanced at the speechless girl; then obediently made off. Hilda sighed in utter relief. Her hideous peril was past.

"Miss Barham," Festus was saying, ceremoniously, "you seem tired. May I ask you to come to my house and rest, while the car is mended or another one made ready? You will find the veranda pleasant at this time of day."

Taking her consent for granted, he led the way across the lawn. Dumbly, dazedly, she fell into step at his side. As they moved on, he began to talk; as though seeking tactfully to mask her discomfiture and to give her time to recover herself. He asked no question. He did not so much as glance at her. To all outward appearances, he had from the first given no sign that the apparition of a fleeing girl and a pursuing man struck him as anything out of the ordinary.

"My grandson," he said, "told me he was to drive you to Monroe, to-day. And he kindly volunteered—I assure you I did not presume to ask or expect it—to come by here and give me the honor of meeting you. He was also foolish enough to think you might perhaps be a little interested in seeing this tumbledown old summer home of ours. The place is hardly worth a trip over such a rough road. I should have had the road made better, long ago, Maurice tells me. But I am hopelessly old-fashioned. And I like to see at least one corner of the world look as it used to when I was a boy. Did Maurice tell you—oh, I forgot, he said he was planning it as a surprise—a very silly one, I think—that this is the old Ragnar manor house? My great-grandfather built it, the year after he came across from Holland. He was the patroon of this Dutch region. All my own summers have been spent here, since I was born. So have Maurice's. I think," as they mounted the veranda steps, "you

will find that *chaise longue* comfortable. May I ring for something for you to drink, or for one of the maids?"

He stood, courteously, beside the long chair, as she sank—or, rather, collapsed—into it. Fighting for words and for ideas, she managed to mumble incoherent thanks. Then she said, guiltily:

"It—it must have been a surprise to you, Mr. Ragnar, to have me throw myself on your mercy, so hysterically, just now. I can hardly apologize. For—"

"My dear Miss Barham," interposed Festus. "Pray give yourself no regret on that score. I have lived too long to be surprised at anything a pretty woman's caprice may lead her to do."

"Caprice?" she flashed, resentment surging back upon her at the word. "Caprice! Did you imagine I could do such a thing for *caprice*?"

"For a jest, then?" he hazarded, blandly. "Or—perhaps for exercise? Permit me to say you run well. As though you had had much practice."

At the possible slur, her white face went scarlet. Wholesome anger swept away her fatigue and the nerve-wrack.

"I was running away from your grandson!" she exclaimed.

"So?" in gentle surprise. "But may I ask, why?"

"It—it was—oh, I can't explain to you! Can't you guess?"

"I am afraid not."

"He had made a pretext to turn off into that deserted mountain road. And at the most deserted spot in it, he stopped the car."

"Yes? And then?"

"And then I ran away. For my very life."

"But why?" he insisted, in amused perplexity.

"Because—oh, *can't* you understand?"

"To arrive here sooner?" he ventured politely. "It was a pretty compliment to a lonely old man. But I still fail to understand your haste or why you were so—so emphatic in your greeting when we met. I appreciate it. Pray

don't think me ungracious. But such speed on a warm day—"

"He—he was close behind me!" she faltered.

"Ah!" he announced, jovially. "A race! At last I begin to see. A race. But you beat him with ease. Perhaps, though, he did not run as fast as he could? Perhaps he was gallant enough to allow you to beat him? He—"

At this point, Miss Hilda Barham suddenly found herself overcome by a spasm of uncontrollable weeping. The strain had been great. And Nature was claiming her own. Even from a New York girl with Twentieth Century nerves. Moreover, the last half-hour's events were re-grouping themselves in a way to change their entire meaning, to the bewildered woman's vision.

Festus Ragnar got up from his seat at the veranda edge.

"Pardon me one moment," said he. "Wait here, please," and he passed through the wide central hall, and out at the rear of the house; leaving her alone. Halfway across to the garage he met Maurice, driving out in a newly-requisitioned runabout.

"One moment!" he ordered as his grandson drew near. "Can you explain any of this? I mean, why Miss Barham left the car when it stopped; and why she ran down the road as if the fiends were after her; and why she threw herself so melodramatically on my breast?"

"No, sir," said Maurice, in very evident sincerity, "I can't. I don't understand it at all."

"What happened?"

"The engine went to sleep. I got out and asked her to walk the rest of the way. She seemed terribly excited and she said the strangest things! Then as I leaned forward to help her from the car, she jumped out, the other side, and began to run."

"You have no idea why?"

"No, sir. Have you?"

For a second the wise old eyes peered keenly into the younger man's troubled face. Then the white thatch of brow cleared.

"I didn't bring you up so badly after all, my dear, dear boy," said Festus, with real tenderness in his dry-as-dust voice. "And there are worse people on earth than Parsifal, the Guileless Fool. Perhaps there are few better, if any. But it is well, just now, that *one* member of the family is neither guileless nor foolish. You don't know what the girl imagined? Well, she imagined what you might have known she would imagine when she said 'I trust you perfectly.' You are in the deuce of a mess, my lad, if she chooses to make trouble for you. If she chooses to keep on believing what she now believes—or pretends to believe."

"Grandfather!" shouted Maurice. "I can't take that, even from you!"

"Yes, you can," contradicted the old man, with a rare tinge of heat in voice and face. "At least once in nearly every man's life, he is brought to bay by some woman. When I say 'brought to bay,' I mean exactly that. Cornered. Forced to fight or surrender. Usually, the woman is the type that 'trusts him perfectly.' And—"

"I—"

"And at such a time the man who is cornered must prove himself to be one of two things: a Rabbit or a Rattlesnake. There is no halfway measure, no compromise. His whole future hangs on it. He must kill or be killed. He must strike and strike hard; with all the venom and heartlessness he can muster. Or he will be captured; wiggling, futile and squealing. It is one of the few times when chivalry does not exist. *You* are in such a corner now. Will you fight your way to freedom; or will you—marry her?"

"I love her," said Maurice, simply.

"Good Lord!"

"I love her. I—I know now what you mean. What she must have thought, poor child! But—"

"'Poor child?'" mocked Festus, bitterly. "It is *you* who are the 'poor child.' Or, rather, the helpless, quivering, invertebrate Rabbit. Oh, if only you would let me help you! I belong to the Rattlesnake breed, myself;

Allah be praised. That is why I married your sweet grandmother instead of one of a dozen women who tried this same prettily feminine trick on me, in one of its thousand variations."

"I love her. I know her as you can't know her. If she was afraid of me, to-day, I shall make it my life-aim to see she shall never be afraid of me again. And I—"

"As you will!" snapped Festus. "She is upstairs, somewhere, getting her tumbled hair re-arranged. Come around to the veranda in ten minutes with the car. She ought to be ready to go, by that time. Meanwhile I wish to be alone."

He turned on his heel and went back into the house; thence through to the veranda where, as he expected, Hilda Barham still sat.

She had fought her tears and had regained some semblance of composure. Festus halted before her. She made as though to say something. But he checked her with an imperative gesture and began to speak.

"Miss Barham," he said, "you will forgive an old man's rudeness? I am talking as I do, only for the happiness of a boy who is dearer to me than you would care to know. Have I your leave to ask you a question or two?"

"Yes, sir," she answered meekly, like a scolded child, wholly overawed by the ageless age and the strange intentness of his black eyes.

"Good!" he approved. "First, then: You fled from my grandson this morning as you would have fled from some rabid beast, did you not?"

She nodded, timidly.

"Why?" he demanded. "I mean, had he ever, by word or deed, given you actual reason to believe he deserved to be classed among rabid beasts?"

And, under the compelling gaze of his strange eyes, she faltered.

"No."

"Has any man ever given you reason for such fear? Any man in real life? I don't mean in such stories as pure young girls nowadays love so to read."

"No, sir."

"So? Has any man ever given a decent girl of your acquaintance cause for such fear? I do not ask: 'has a man squeezed such a girl's hand, or tried to kiss her when they were sitting out a dance in a conservatory?' But has any good woman of your acquaintance had practical reason to fear that some man-friend of good breeding would seek to harm her?"

"N-no," she hesitated.

"Then, madam," he burst forth, "why, in heaven's name, did you suspect my grandson?"

But there was no answer.

"Or," he said, very slowly, "did you imagine that by pretending to think so, you could perhaps induce him to—make amends?"

"You dare to think that?" she blazed. "You dare to think so? Oh! I—"

"No," he replied, his aged eyes boring into the very soul of her. "I do not think it. And I ask your pardon that I did. I was wrong. You are not what I thought. And, in a way, I am glad. But, if you will forgive my saying so, you are something, to my mind, far worse than a knave. You are a fool!"

To his stark amaze she did not resent his words or tone; but answered brokenly:

"I know I am. I see I am. I don't know why I'm not angry at you for saying so. But—somehow, I thank you for it. I would never have known—but for you."

"Yes," he agreed, more mildly, "it was necessary to operate. I have done it as gently as I could. But still too roughly for comfort. I rather like your spirit, Miss Barham. I am older than most of you people of the new generation will ever live to be. May I tell you something that the years have taught me? Something that may save you from peril! I will be brief."

She bowed her head, swallowing back the sobs.

"You have been judging human nature—chiefly man-nature," he said gently, "from the stories you have read. The plays you have seen. I know that; without even asking what you read or

see. For you are like the rest. You will never learn anything about human nature until you study it at first-hand and for yourself. You will keep on misjudging people. Because you will forever be judging them by the standards of story-book characters; who never lived except in their author's brains. Human nature does not change. It cannot change, any more than God can change. It is the same to-day as when Adam was shapen. If you had taken the trouble to study human nature from the people around you, instead of from stories of fiction, you would long ago have been able to tell the difference between a man and a brute. You would have saved my dear boy from a cruel insult and yourself from fright and bitter humiliation. Are you wise enough—are you *great* enough—to profit by to-day's lesson?"

"I am not wise," she said. "I am not great. I am what you said I was. I *am* a fool. But—perhaps I'm not the very worst type of fool—the type that makes the same shameful blunder twice."

"I am glad," he said gravely. "And now, as I suppose you will scarcely care to face Maurice again, I will have my chauffeur drive you over to Monroe. And—once more, I am glad."

* * *

Maurice Ragnar came around the drive in the runabout and neared the veranda steps.

"Go back into the hall," adjured Festus, holding open the door for the girl,

"I will explain to him. You need not see him again. It will be easier for you both."

"No," she said, very quietly. "I am going to Monroe with him. If he will take me."

"And you are not afraid to face him after what has happened?" scoffed Festus; worry tightening the snow-thatched brows once more.

"Yes," she made answer, "I am afraid. Horribly afraid. At least, I ought to be. But—but 'perfect love casteth out fear.' I know that, now. I wish I had known it before you opened my eyes. Good-bye, sir. And thank you. I'm ready, Maurice."

Very old, very frail, very lonely, Festus Ragnar stood on the steps, his dreary eyes fixed on the vanishing car. Not knowing he was speaking, he began presently to think aloud; after the manner of the aged.

"It was a good fight," he mumbled. "A good, good fight.—But when Youth and Age battle, there can be but one result.—One result.—He and she are giants.—Because they have Love.—I am a pygmy.—Because I have only Wisdom.—There could be but one result.—Rabbit or Rattlesnake? Which will he be?—Rabbit or Rattlesnake?"

He sighed tremblingly; then muttered to himself, as he moved into the house:

"Whichever he is to be, it won't be a Rattlesnake.—She will see to that.—A good fight.—And I lost it.—Lost it—and *him*!"



THERE is no such thing as a downright ugly woman. The very plainest is admired by some boob or other, and if not by some boob, then at least by herself.



LOVE is dead when a woman's kisses make a man think of a vacuum cleaner.



THE PREPOSTEROUS PRINCESS

By Stacy Aumonier

ONCE upon a time there was a Princess who was adorably beautiful. She was so beautiful that all the Rotary Film Companies in the world fell over each other trying to get a snapshot of her ankles as she walked across Grosvenor Square. For, of course, she lived in Grosvenor Square and kept five butlers, eleven maids and fifteen expensive little dogs. She was so beautiful that, when she came to London, three leading musical comedy ladies committed suicide, and a fourth broke off an engagement to an earl and married a boy she was fond of—just in sheer panic. By the time she was twenty she had received four hundred thousand, nine hundred and thirty-six offers of marriage. Practically every unmarried male who saw her photograph wrote and proposed. They came in vanloads from America, China, Japan, India and the colonies. She was so beautiful that people looked at her in the street and then fainted right away. She was so beautiful that savage tribes in Central Africa fought over the torn remains of a photograph of her in the illustrated weeklies. Editors of daily papers bartered their principles, politicians went into exile, artists went insane, duels by the thousand took place every day between men of note who quarreled at the mention of her name. By which you will gather that she was an exceptionally beautiful woman. One day a young man named Kismet Ug, an assistant in a dry-goods store at Golgotha, Michigan, who had saved up a few hundred dollars to do Europe, was passing through Grosvenor Square on his way to the Wallace Collection,

when he beheld the Princess walking across the Square, followed by her fifteen dogs. "Gee!" he murmured through a plug of chewing-gum, that he was thoughtfully removing from one cheek to another, "this is the real goods at last!" He was a small, flat-faced boy with a yellow rubber face and a large chin and a flat gray hat. He followed her to the house and watched her go in, followed by her canine retinue. Then he stood by the area railings and leaned his chin on the iron bars and expectorated meditatively into the area. He stood there chewing for five hours and then the Princess came out and got into an electric brougham. As she walked across the pavement he stepped forward and took off his hat. It was the first time he had done such an act of degrading obeisance, but he felt the cause merited it. However, the Princess did not notice him, and he only succeeded in treading on one of the dogs. For four days he stood there, repeating this action. Every time the Princess came out he went up and took off his hat, but the Princess did not see him. On the fourth day a Georgian-looking gentleman in knee breeches came out of the house and advised him to clear off "as he was being watched." As he refused to do this the guards were called and he was taken off to the guardhouse, where they fell on him and beat him. For fourteen days he lay in a dungeon without light or food. On the fifteenth day he was back again hanging on the railing in Grosvenor Square. When the Princess came out it was raining. She glanced at the sky on the way to her brougham,

Before she had time to look down again, Ug had taken off his coat and thrown it down for her to walk across. She walked round it and got into her car and drove off. In the evening the guards came again and fell on him again and beat him, and this time he was thrown into a dungeon for thirty days. On the thirty-first day he was back again in his position in the Square. He had a wonderful chin. But the Princess was gone. He bribed the postman and found that she had gone to the South of France, and by this time Kismet Ug had no money. But time was urgent, so he managed to bring off the "Spanish Prisoner" swindle on an innocent old retired colonel and to relieve him of two hundred pounds and then he went to seek his Princess. He found her at Mentone, staying in a wonderful old chateau. He stood outside the gate and bowed to the ground when she came out. She was accompanied by a Finance Minister and two Generals and she did not see him. But he waited there for three days. And then the French Police fell on him and he was condemned to death as a spy, but the day before he was to be shot, the wife of the head of a Ruling State, who was visiting that part, gave birth to twins, and to celebrate the event the Government granted amnesty to all political offenders. He was released and returned to the chateau of the Princess. He waited there for thirty-six hours without seeing the Princess. But one of the Generals had noticed him and he sent a small platoon of his men and they seized him in the dark and threw him into the sea. He was picked up by a Spanish vegetable boat and taken to Algeciras, living all the time on beet-root and raw fish. He was thrashed every night by the captain and made to do all the roughest work. At Algeciras they took all his money from him and threw him ashore. He worked his way through Spain assisting at a travelling circus and at length reached France. He walked the length of the Pyrenees living on acorns and moss and eventually reached the Mediterranean coast.

He got a job in the dock of Marseilles and by going without food for three days saved enough money to get to Mentone. When he arrived there the Princess had gone. She had returned to London. He bought a picture postcard of her and set out for England, placing it next to his heart. By borrowing a little money and playing poker, at which he was singularly proficient, he eventually made through to London and turned up at his railing in Grosvenor Square. After waiting only two hours and a half she came out accompanied by the king of some Near Eastern State, two Viscounts and a Scotch architect, who had inherited a fortune. He went up and took off his hat and the Scotch architect stabbed him in the wind with his umbrella, taking him for a rate collector. He was carried in an ambulance to a hospital, where he remained for three weeks. On the day he came out he returned to his position, for he had a WONDERFUL chin.

This went on for three years and then, one day, the Princess noticed him. He had tracked her down at the country seat of a Duke, but there he made himself so importunate that the Duke had instructed his gamekeepers to shoot him by mistake for a poacher. But one morning the Princess was going for a walk by the lake with her dogs (there were now forty-seven), when one of them, a Pekinese that she called "Casserole," started foaming at the mouth and running round in circles. This was Ug's opportunity. Since he first met the Princess he had been studying Dog. He had Friedbergor and Fröhner's Veterinary Pathology at his finger-tips. He sprang out from behind a statue of Pan, where he had been hiding, and seizing "Casserole" he injected a small tube behind the dog's ear and "Casserole" became herself again. Several friends of the Duke rushed up and would have torn him to pieces, but the Princess held up her hand. "Stay," she said. "Spare him!" So they led him up to the house, where the Duke, who was also a Justice of the Peace, gave

him two months in the third division for "loitering with intent." But again the Princess intervened. "Listen!" she said, and her voice was the most glorious music he had ever heard, "Listen! I don't know who this horrid little man is, but he seems to be clever at Dog. I will have him in my kennels." So Ug was released and placed under the third dog-groom in the service of the Princess and this was the golden hour of his life. For a year he saw the Princess every day. And he became so proficient at boning pheasants for the Pekinese and teaching the chows to do tricks that he was made head groom, and on several occasions the Princess spoke to him personally. But the passion of his life was consuming him. One day he had just performed a very delicate and highly successful operation on a Lhasa terrier called "Boco." The Princess came into the Dogs' operating theatre, where Ug was manicuring his nails, and thanked him with tears in her voice. Then Ug let himself go. He knelt down and poured out his love. The full tide of his pent-up passion poured forth in silver speech, hyphenated by the virile vernacular of Golgotha. It was tremendous. The Princess had never heard anything like it. She rang a bell and summoned her retinue of princes, politicians, editors and financiers who were waiting in a long queue in the hall to propose. They all trooped into the Dogs' operating theatre. "Now!" said the Princess, touching Ug on the shoulders, "do that again. It was beautiful." Ug turned round and glanced at the sneering cortege of worshippers and his heart quailed within him, but the touch of the Princess on his shoulder fired his blood. Setting his chin, he started once more to declare his passion in no uncertain terms. His eyes flashed and his bosom heaved as he flung the fine flowers of his rhetoric among the contemptuous followers. He piled Pelion on Ossa in lavish praise of the Princess. He tore the stars from their firmament in vaunting his ambitions. He was Cæsar, Napoleon, John Stuart Mill in one. He

was immense. A newspaper magnate, who was present, offered him the editorship of any one of six hundred newspapers that he controlled. A Bishop who had come all the way from Madagascar to propose to the Princess went straight back that afternoon. Two Dukes took to drugs, and a Japanese plenipotentiary hanged himself in the kennel next door. The Princess was delighted. She raised his salary and sent him fruit from her own table. Whenever an especially distinguished crowd of visitors arrived they were taken out to the Dogs' operating theatre to hear Ug propose. In time Ug became restless. It was glorious, but not what he meant. One day he heard her tell an ambassador that she would love to have a pergola of onyx and an arcade with figures of the Muses carved in rock crystal, but she simply couldn't *afford* it! This was at her country seat. The remark gave Ug food for thought. The next day he went to her and said: "Princess, may I give you a pergola of onyx, and an arcade with figures of the Muses carved in rock crystal?" The Princess clapped her hands and said: "Oh, yes, that would be beautiful!" The thought also occurred to her that it would be a good way to get rid of him, as the proposals were beginning to pall, and a troop of Chinese fencers had turned up and were voted a more amusing entertainment. So Ug left her and went away to find a pergola of onyx, and an arcade with figures of the Muses carved in rock crystal, and he found that onyx and rock crystal were the most expensive materials in the world, and to carve figures full size would cost millions of pounds. So he crossed the ocean and went to Golgotha. Now, Golgotha is a place where no one lives; it is right out beyond everywhere. It is a vast miasma of corrugated zinc and high chimneys, and things crawl to and fro and stoke and rivet. Ug got there and entered a rubber works. He stayed there for four years. By working sixteen hours a day and gradually ousting people above him he eventually became

the manager. He saved all his salary and bought stock. He studied stock during the night, also rock crystal. He returned a millionaire and went back to the Princess. She was away from her country seat. He bribed the factotum to let him have control of the garden while she was away. He engaged the finest sculptors of the day and made the pergola of onyx and the arcade of Muses in rock crystal.

At length the Princess returned. He hid behind a statue as she drove up the drive. He saw her lean forward in her car and say to the King of —, who was riding with her, "Whatever are all these horrid glass figures doing here?"

"These are the Muses carved in the rock-crystal, Princess," said Ug, springing forward.

"Oh, but I'm tired of rock-crystal," said the Princess, and the King of —, who was a very big man and a fine polo player, muttered, "Disgusting!" and getting out of the car he threw all the Muses into the lake.

Ug stood there chewing and meditating and looking at the lake all day, but toward nightfall the Princess, taking compassion on him, sent for him to come and see her. "Of course," she said, when he arrived, "I think it was very sweet of you to take all that trouble, but I simply can't bear rock-crystal now—nobody has it. But still I'm very sorry. If you like you can go and have some supper in the servants' hall." Ug thanked her and retired, for he really wanted his supper. But the next day he went to her and said: "Princess, I'm sorry about that rock-crystal; of course I wasn't to know you'd have gone off of it. I suppose it's natural. You are the real goods. Tell me, what can I do for you? I have the stuff."

The Princess liked to hear people talk like that, so she said: "Ah, I knew you were a clever little man. It's emeralds I'm interested in now, emeralds and amethysts."

"Then you shall have the finest emeralds in the world," said Ug. "If I

bring these, will you—" He couldn't finish the sentence, because the Princess was looking at him out of the corner of her eyes, and it took his breath away.

"If you bring me these," said the Princess, "I will be very kind to you," and she dismissed him.

Ug went back to Golgotha and realized all his remaining stock, but he found that emeralds cost much more than he had, so he set to work again, and he floated several companies and sold a railway that didn't exist, and then started buying emeralds. In a year's time his agents were all over the world buying emeralds and amethysts for the Princess. At length he had all the best emeralds and amethysts in the world and he drove up to her house in the country with seven van-loads full. When the Princess saw the emeralds and the amethysts, she said, "Oh, dear me, what a lot!"

"They are yours," said Ug.

"But, you see," said the Princess, "I only wanted emeralds and amethysts because the Duchess of K. had emeralds and amethysts and I wanted better ones than hers; but now she doesn't seem to have any. No one seems to have any; they are not worn!"

"I see," said Ug; "I've overdone it a bit." So he drove the van-loads of precious stones to the village and gave them to the village children, and they made wonderful grottos with them, and there they remain to this day. But the Princess invited him to stop to tea and Ug felt that all his efforts were justified. He sat in a room packed with notabilities and watched them pass cake to the Princess, for he was in too great a state of emotionalism to take any part in the proceedings. But he felt he was making headway, and the Princess even introduced him to the assistant secretary of the Burmese Legation. She said, "This is Mr. Ug, who cured Boco." It was wonderful; Ug was in his Seventh Heaven.

Before he was dismissed the Princess called him into the library. "I am sorry about those emeralds," she said.

"It's so trying—the way people change, I mean."

"Let me try again," said Ug doggedly. "Anything in the world you mention I will get for you."

The Princess sighed, and then she said: "I am having a new ceiling to my music-room. It would be lovely if I could have some original ceiling paintings by Paul Veronese."

"If I bring you these—" said Ug, tentatively.

"If you bring me these—" said the Princess, and tears sprang to her eyes and she held out her hand to him to kiss.

Three days later Ug was in Rome interviewing the Italian Ministry. Much to his surprise he found that the Veronese ceiling paintings in the Ducal Palace at Venice were not for sale. Moreover, he learned that there was a law prohibiting the export of Works of Art. Ug immediately set to work. By means of enormous bribes he got numbers of the Opposition on his side who committed themselves to get this law rescinded.

For four months he went up and down the country with his confederates, bribing and cajoling. In the Spring, the Government was overthrown, and the first law the new party passed was that permitting the export of Works of Art. This led to Revolution. Thousands were killed in the streets of Rome and Milan. Foreign Powers intervened. But on the night when the law was once more reinstated, Ug smuggled the paintings out of the Ducal Palace and onto a specially chartered steamer. In twelve days they were delivered at the country house of the Princess. She was not there. She had gone to Paris. Ug deposited the paintings in the basement (where they remain to this day). In Paris the Princess received him with open arms.

"Oh, Mr. Ug," she said, "I have been wanting you. Where have you been?" Ug told her with all modesty. But the Princess seemed to have lost interest in Art, she was full of a new idea.

"Mr. Ug," she said, "I want you to buy me Paris!"

"Paris!" said Ug.

"Yes," she answered, and her expression was devastating.

"If I buy you Paris," said Ug desperately, "will you marry me?"

The Princess seemed very moved. She could hardly speak.

"Paris is a big thing," urged Ug; "it means big money. I will have to go back to Golgotha and get a move on things."

"I will marry no one else or consent to marry anyone else till you have bought me Paris," said the Princess ambiguously.

Ug left her presence inspired. He went right back to Golgotha. He built new workshops and factories. He dealt in more stock. He opened offices in Chicago, New York and Boston. He lay awake every night scheming and plotting. He got railway concessions from Foreign Powers and turned them into Companies and sold them. He made a corner in ice-water and made the people pay a dollar a pitcher for it. He floated bogus companies and sold things to himself and bought them again and sold them again. He controlled pig iron, mushrooms, blankets, jute, and hogger-pumps. Even then it took him two years to raise sufficient capital to buy Paris. He bought it lying in a bed at New York with telephones, electric batteries, and wireless instalments fitted up all around him. When the contract was completed he cabled to the Princess:

"Paris is yours, will you marry me?" Then he fell back on the cushions and waited four months in breathless suspense.

In the meantime the machinery of his affairs worked of its own accord. Vast masses of Capital accumulated and large staffs were employed in all the Capitals giving away wash-houses, libraries and swimming baths as rapidly as they could. Ug lay in bed, vitalized by injections of strychnine and high-voltage electric batteries. At the end of four months a cable arrived from the Princess.

"Wedding Delhi eighteenth Durbar rajahs and elephants."

The amazing ambiguity of this message, the uncertainty as to whether it meant that she would marry him or someone else, whether he was to arrange the Durbar and buy the elephants, or whether it meant that she was going to marry a rajah or an elephant and was merely inviting him to it—whether she meant the 18th of this month or the next (if she meant this month it meant starting at once and traveling a thousand miles a day for three weeks), put him into such a fever that it brought on heart collapse and he died.

When Ug arrived in Heaven, he was led before the Celestial Tribunal and they asked him his name.

"Kismet Ug," he answered. At the mention of that name the members of the Tribunal started and an official stepped forward and said:

"Are we to understand that you are *the* Kismet Ug who gave away all those wash-houses and libraries to towns all over the world?"

"The same," said Ug.

"Dear me!" said the official, and he returned to the group. There was a whispered consultation, then the official came forward again and said:

"Kismet Ug, come with me!" They led him up and up through realms of light and the official said:

"Kismet Ug, a special Paradise has been prepared for you. Behold! Everything has been thought of that your heart could desire," and he pointed to a wonderful room where were lounges of luxurious comfort and all around the walls golden cases filled with cigars that Ug's experienced eye guessed would fetch at least nine or ten dollars apiece on Broadway.

"This is dandy," said Ug.

"But this is not all," said the official, "follow me," and they passed through wonderful corridors where the strains of Heavenly music were wafted, and the official pointed to a diaphanous curtain.

"Look," he said, "all this is waiting for you, Kismet Ug, you have only to lift the curtain and joy is ever present and Eternal Beauty awaits you."

"Yes," said Ug, "and so it darn well can."

"What do you mean?" said the Celestial Authority.

"What I mean," answered Ug, "is, that she's missed her chance!" and elbowing his way past the Powers of Heaven, he returned to the smoke-room.



ALBATRE

By Ezra Pound

THIS lady in the white bath-robe, which she calls a peignoir,
Is, for the time being, mistress of my friend,
And the delicate white feet of her little dog
Are not more delicate than she is.

Nor would Gautier himself have despised their contrasts in whiteness.

As she sits in the great chair
Between the two indolent candles.

THE WORKER OF MIRACLES

By Achmed Abdullah

"TWO hundred a week then, Ibrahim."

It was the third time I had raised my offer. But he smiled in response.

"No, no, Effendi. Not for two hundred, nor for four hundred, nor for a thousand. Why should I? Behold these rooms." He pointed with a circular sweep of his lean, muscular arms. "They are luxurious, elegant, well appointed. They are mine. So is the house. It belongs to me. I am a man of leisure, a wealthy man. Italians and Jews and Bulgarians and other cursed infidels are my tenants. But what do I care? They pay. Punctually on the first of every month they pay."

There was a look in his keen brown eyes which told me why they paid so punctually. But I had not known that the handsome, feline young Egyptian owned the large tenement house. I had thought he would jump at my liberal cash offer.

So now I pleaded.

"Please, Ibrahim. I ask it as a personal favor. Two hundred a week. We furnish all the costumes, and we bill your name on the screens. I need you, man. It's the best moving picture play of the year. And you're the very man to play that part. Be a sport and sign on."

The Egyptian laughed. He shook his head. Then I thought of another point of attack.

"I guess you're frightened, old man. Stage-shy, eh? Good Lord, don't be nervous. The stage is . . ."

He interrupted me with another light laugh.

"It is to the stage that I owe these so

very splendid furnishings, also the house, also my bank account."

I looked at him in utter amazement. Of course, I knew that the life of this handsome young Oriental had been a perfect Odyssey. But here was a new chapter. I asked him point-blank.

He smiled modestly.

"You have heard of the great Hindu magician, of Swami Gurudas Ram Mehta, the favored of the gods, the worker of many and quite inexplicable miracles?"

"Why, of course. Used to be on the Orpheum. For many years. He simply coined money. Then he disappeared. What about him?"

"Nothing much. I am that same Swami."

I asked rapidly half a dozen more questions. Then Ibrahim told me.

"Why did I, a man, a Mahomedan, an Egyptian, disguise myself as a Hindu pig, an eater of unclean food, a worshiper of unbeautiful, powerless and particularly accursed idols?"

He laughed.

"My friend, I was what you call stony-broke in your picturesque language; and it appeared that nobody in San Francisco wanted my services. Not a single one of those Syrian swine in New York was willing to send me rugs or laces on a ninety days' note. Ah, cursed be the fathers of their grand-fathers!

"So I tightened my waistband and my Moslem pride. I ate the unclean abominations of the low-castes in the free-lunch places . . . may the All-Merciful forgive me!

"I had no place to sleep except the public parks. But there large policemen

tickled the soles of my feet with their sticks. Which reminded me unpleasantly of the bastinado of my own land. So I wandered about the streets and the hotel lobbies . . . and I observed many things.

"I had lived in India. And now I remembered how I used to wonder why so many Calcutta sweepers return from America to their own land, their waistbands swelling with rupees, givers of many nautch parties, opulent eaters of rich and unhealthy food. I looked for the solution of the riddle; and presently, by the will of the Most High, I found it.

"Thus one night, in a dark alley near Lower Kearney Street, I borrowed ten dollars from an Armenian . . . no, no, I did not injure him very badly . . . and I went to Southern California. There I invented a new religion, a new cult, a new method of eating and breathing.

"I founded a New-Thought Colony, and many people came to see me. Hundreds came, hundreds and hundreds. They looked at me with worship in their eyes. They listened to me. And, indeed, my friend, I am suave of tongue; though I say it who should not. Thus they paid me many dollars for being allowed to live as they did not like to live.

"Curious cattle they . . . oh my eyes . . . very curious cattle!

"I made them dress like whirling dervishes in a tantrum. I fed them new-thought milk and new-thought eggs. . . ." He smiled. "Ah, those were the days of plenty.

"But Fate has her rope about our heels, and at the appointed hour she pulls. Even so.

"For one day a very large woman came into my room without knocking at the door . . . it is indeed said that we should avoid the female with heavy eyelids and the damp palms of fatness. . . .

"She came into my room at the very hour when I was supposed to be meditating in a deep, holy, Brahm-sent trance; the hour which I had shrouded purposely in a thick veil of purple

mysteries and breath-clogging weirdness.

"Yes, oh my heart, she came into my room, being a fat woman with three chins, inquisitive and very ill-mannered. And instead of beholding me with my eyes rolled upwards, my throat swallowing my tongue, and spiritual communion with Brahm blanching my cheek . . . instead of that, oh day of much sorrow, she found me engaged in an earnest discussion with a cold boiled lobster, some fresh, crisp, buttered rolls . . . and (is not a learned and broad-minded man to interpret the Koran his own way?) . . . a glass of beer.

"Afterwards I thought that I could have explained the lobster and the buttered rolls. But the beer proved my undoing.

"Beer—and Brahm-sent trance! The two did not agree, my friend. They did not blend. They did not mate. Not at all!

"Nobody knows the heart of woman. She poisons her husband with dhaturia, and then she mounts on the funeral-pyre and becomes suttee. This woman, oh my eyes, who had been my most faithful disciple, who had called me Master and Inspired One, who had sat at my feet as a Bakhta, learning devotion, resignation, and the correct air of breathing . . . on whose heart I had played as on a deep-toned and most melodious chord . . . this woman turned on me with unfeminine ferocity. She called me fraud and humbug and faker and near-Bulgarian, and the American equivalent of the descendant of ten thousand and three shameless and especially illegitimate cows. Her language was not nice. Oh, no.

"I did the best I could. I offered her a share in the enterprise. I even offered to marry her, may the forty-seven true Mahommedan Saints intercede on my behalf on the Day of Judgment! But no. She only thought of revenge. She told the others. There were many strong men amongst them. Also women of character and determination.

"The house was a wreck after they got through. So was I.

"And thus ended my New-Thought Colony . . . and I was forced to turn my humble wits into new channels.

"So I darkened my face. I let my beard grow in the fashion of the dirty and very accursed Punjaubis. And I became the great Swami Gurudas Ram Mehta, the famous Hindu magician, the beloved of the gods, the worker of many astounding and quite inexplicable miracles.

"By the red pig's bristles, but I was a guru amongst gurus. And oh, heart of my heart, the coin I made! Behold this room, this house, my bank account. Let them be witnesses to the fact of the miracles which I performed.

"You ask How and What and Why? Is there not a saying in this country that money talks?" He took a well-filled pocketbook and slammed it on the table. "Behold then this wad, oh, Effendi. Listen well to what it is saying.

"Not yet satisfied? Very well then. I shall tell you.

"You see, beloved one, the men and the women of your country willingly paid much money to see me perform the many miracles. I was wonderful. By the teeth of the Prophet of the True God, but I was wonderful!

"I stepped forth onto a much lighted platform, and I put a mango seed on the ground. Thrice I passed my hand over it, thus, murmuring:

*"Bhut, pret, pisach, dana,
Chhee mantar, sab nikal jana,
Mane mane, Shivka khahna"*

and the mango shot in the air . . . in bloom . . . Allah . . . in fruit.

"Again I waved my hand, and behold: the mango was gone.

"I threw a rope into the air, and it remained standing, without support, straight, erect, lithe, like a peopul tree. I waved my hand in a certain manner . . . thus . . . and a little boy came from nowhere and climbed up the rope.

"Behold: I made a pass, a very mysterious pass with my swordhand, and the boy disappeared into the high heavens . . . so high did the rope stretch upwards . . . out of sight. Again I would say words of Hindi enchantment. Again I moved my hand in the prescribed fashion . . . and the little boy would tumble down, bleeding and broken, a fit meal for vultures.

"The crowd groaned and shivered, and so I stamped my right foot . . . thus . . . and behold: the rope had disappeared, and also the boy.

"Then I looked straight at the crowd, for many seconds, and again I waved my hand. And a woman came. I whispered the secret word, and suddenly a glistening Khyberee sword flashed in my right hand. I lifted it high above my head. I struck with all my might. And, by the Secret of Khizr, her head would roll onto the platform. Blood would squirt. And the people were aghast, sucking in their breath like little, lisping babes in the dark.

"And then I waved my hand for the last time, and there would be neither woman, nor sword, nor blood.

"Allah Kureem . . . I worked the many miracles, miracles like the great Prophet Esa, on whom be Peace!"

I was silent. I looked at Ibrahim. I knew that he had spoken the truth. For three years the Swami had been the sensation of America.

Finally I ventured a question:

"Tell me, Ibrahim. How the devil did you do it?"

Ibrahim smiled a thousand-year-old smile.

"Effendi full of wisdom, indeed, I was never able to see myself what the people said they saw, and what they paid much money for being allowed to see. *People always see what they wish to see.*"



A PANORAMA OF MEN

By Mrs. W. L. D. Bell

FAT, slick, round-faced men, of the sort who haunt barber-shops and are always having their shoes shined. Tall, gloomy, Gothic men, with eyebrows that meet over their noses and bunches of black, curly hair in their ears. Men wearing diamond solitaires, fraternal order watch-charms, golden elks' heads with rubies for eyes. Men with thick, loose lips and shifty eyes. Men smoking pale, spotted cigars. Men who do not know what to do with their hands when they talk to women. Honorable, upright, successful men who seduce their stenographers and are kind to their dear old mothers. Men who allow their wives to dress like chorus girls. White-faced, scared-looking, yellow-eyed men who belong to societies for the suppression of vice. Men who boast that they neither drink nor smoke. Men who mop their bald heads with perfumed handkerchiefs. Men with

drawn, mottled faces, in the last stages of arteriosclerosis. Silent, stupid-looking men in thick tweeds who tramp up and down the decks of ocean steamers. Men who peep out of hotel rooms at Swedish chambermaids. Men who go to church on Sunday morning, carrying Oxford Bibles under their arms. Men in dress coats too tight under the arms. Tea-drinking men. Loud, back-slapping men, gabbling endlessly about baseball players. Men who have never heard of Mozart. Tired business men with fat, glittering wives. Men who know what to do when children are sick. Men who believe that any woman who smokes is a prostitute. Yellow, diabetic men. Men whose veins are on the outside of their noses. Now and then a clean, clear-eyed, upstanding man. Once a week or so a man with good shoulders, straight legs and a hard, kissable mouth. . . .



SONG

By Robert Loveman

I THANK thee, God, that I was strong
That life leap'd lusty in my blood,
For ev'ry thrush or linnet song,
For love and all our nestling brood.

I bless thee, God, that I am old,
And bent and poor, and weak and blind.
I drained the chalices of gold,
Firmly I face the leaden wind.



A CHRONIC and notorious liar is always unpopular. But it is the truth-teller that they hang.

THE WITHERED ROSE

By G. Vere Tyler

I

SHE was as fragile as a tea-rose blooming above the snow in the month of December; scarcely more than the wraith of a woman, but in the slim, nervous frame was contained a fire that glowed like the dull flame in the crimson sanctuary lamps of altars.

She had pretty, pale blue eyes, fawn-colored hair, teeth like pearls, a phosphorescent smile, and she walked, chin slightly extended, apparently oblivious of her environment, with a quick, nervous, half-bravado stride that attracted attention. Always on her lovely face was a childlike half-absent but self-conscious expression that melted into a shadow of refined pain. She clothed herself like an angel and at times, with her pale, fading face, in the blazing electric lights, surrounded by more material beings, she looked like one.

Flitting about like a lost soul in quest of something, to every new acquaintance she told the sad history of her life and of her failing strength, and those who had been deceived and then undeceived looked on and smiled. To each stranger she was a pathetic, abused, persecuted, misunderstood being whom the injustice and cruelty of the world had left the nervous wreck they beheld.

Occasionally her acts belied her statements. She might be seen dancing gaily; demolishing lobster after midnight; holding the ribbons over a spirited horse, or sipping numerous glasses of champagne. But these were things that circumstances or an uncomprehending world forced upon her.

This delicate creature, withering of

time and her own internal fire, feeling the power upon which she had feasted herself and wrecked others slipping from her, longed with feverish persistence to inspire riotous passions as she had done in the past when her fresh physical charms, that nature had chosen to make as ethereal as the sensuous pallor of waxen candles, had subdued and temporarily maddened men. In spite, however, of conducive environment, gorgeous forests, leafy bowers, glittering lights, rapturous music—all these things that came spontaneously to her aid, as a part of a fashionable mountain resort; in spite, also of the fact that there were occasional half hours, or hours even, of hope when, for instance, a partner suggestively pressed her form in a dance, or a bottle of wine was opened in her honor, night found her shut in her own room, disappointed, fluttering and quivering like a little scorched moth.

In those moments she would angrily question her features in her mirror that cruelly showed her a pallid, vanishing beauty which apparently fastened upon itself but a glance. At times a shudder passed over her, and she would feel herself a beautiful corpse that people looked at in admiration and turned from in horror. In such a mood the sight of wives, serene and comfortable from the embraces of commonplace husbands; or unattached women inspiring the madness of infatuation upon which she had so long existed; or the insolent impudence of young girls, curious and anticipatory, yet sure of the future, would cause a kind of biting fury to attack her so that her little sharp-pointed tongue would make ready

to emit remarks as full of venom as a snake's fang.

II

IN the poisoned but softly illumined atmosphere of this childless divorcée, sadly and mystically, a rare product of centuries of cultivation, moved the young Japanese Yeijiro Tochigi.

Small, of compact build, modestly but elegantly dressed; on his person valuable jewels that would have gleamed vulgarly on an American, but that blended magnificently with his sombre personality, he appeared to exist in order to breathe a conscious and silent disdain. Giving a supercilious look here, a contemptuous one there, a bright smile very seldom, he was invariably silent, gentle and unapproachable. He occupied an expensive suite and occasionally through an open door could be seen costumed in richly embroidered robes of his native country.

His valet confided wondrous tales in the servants' dining hall of the splendor of these things; his jewels and sleeping-garments. The valet's tales reached the guests and naturally Célestine, in whom they evoked a curious feverish interest.

For weeks Mr. Yeijiro Tochigi had avoided her subtle but bewitching glances as she intentionally met him at every turn, smiled in his eyes or looked at him over her shoulders. Finally, laughing gaily in his face, she spoke to him.

"Why do you always look so sad?" she asked him mischievously.

Tochigi, who was reading a book in the brilliant rotunda, beneath an electric light encased in an opal globe, looked up and vouchsafed his bright smile.

"I not sad," he answered, surprised.

"Then lonely?" smiled Célestine.

"I not lonely," he replied.

"Your only companion, however," she persisted, "seems to be a book."

"Book very good companion," he returned naïvely, "when one not acquainted."

"But now, since you and I have become acquainted?" she asked archly.

"I shut quick book," he replied, doing so and rising politely.

Célestine, outwardly calm but inwardly triumphant, led him, after a few flippant words, through the crowded place to the piazza, that at this particular hour was rather deserted.

In front of them on the lawn the flowers showed black in the moonlight, and a short distance beyond the lake gleamed like a sheet of silver.

"Have you ever been out on the lake?" asked Célestine, who was in white and had her angel look.

"You mean float boat?"

"Yes, float boat," she laughed.

"No, I never float boat—that is, not in America."

"But can you?"

"Oh! yes, I can!"

"Then," Célestine's eyes looked wonders, "since it is a beautiful moonlight night why not come and make your first experiment with me?"

"You mean I float boat with you—you and me?" Tochigi again looked surprised.

"Yes," replied Célestine quickly, "why not?"

"You not know me very well!"

"But," urged Célestine, "I *want* to know you very well!"

He looked more surprised. "Why?" he asked.

"Because you interest me."

"Then," said the Japanese politely, "very glad go."

Beautiful indeed the night was; calm and placid as the folded wings of a sleeping bird with the moon shining victoriously, almost rapturously. Glancing into the impassive, classic face of the youth as she led him across the grass, Célestine trembled.

"You row well!" she said later as their boat, under his sure hand, glided swiftly over the moonlit lake.

He made no reply to this, and she herself yielded to the sensuous movement of the boat and low ripple of the waters.

The silence was exquisite and as the

boat, sailing past water-lilies, seemed finally to reach a spot where the waters had been warmed, a strange, delicious faintness overcame Célestine. In the moment a thousand memories rose up and wrapped her as in a mantle, and her imagination continued to soar and take color from contact with the Orient. It seemed to her that the banks became lined with little Geisha girls doing queer dances and flinging flowers; that the trees were all decorated with swinging Japanese lanterns of soft, mystical colors that blended bewilderingly with the pale cherry blossoms of the boughs.

"How do you pronounce your name?" she asked finally, after a long, penetrating look upon his face.

He told her.

"It sounds like poetry!"

"You like poetry?"

"Not very much. Have you had many love affairs in America?" she put forth carefully as she bent slightly forward.

A dark flush that she could not see spread over his face as he answered with sharp fervor: "I never love woman!"

"But," she returned naively, "Mr. Yeijiro Tochigi has himself been loved by women?"

He was silent.

"No? Then let me tell Mr. Yeijiro Tochigi that he has not yet lived! It is only those who love who fathom the meaning of life! If Mr. Yeijiro Tochigi does not give himself up to love he had as well be one of his own stone images! But Mr. Yeijiro Tochigi is not a stone image, and he must not lie! Do I not know well the stories of the little Geisha girls?"

As she spoke she leaned further forward and smiled, looking in the pale moonlight like some recently fallen angel.

"I not care Geisha girls," answered Tochigi with slight irritation. "I like talk serious subjects," he added reprovingly.

"In America we think love is serious," answered Célestine, holding his eyes with a hypnotic gaze. "Shall I tell

Mr. Yeijiro Tochigi what love means to an American woman?"

"No," answered Tochigi sternly, "I not care those subjects."

A sudden breeze fanned their faces, rocked the boat and swayed their bodies. Recovering her position, Célestine laughed the practised laugh that was like little bells that the vaudeville artists shake in their fingers and make music of, and that she had often known to attack the nerves. She felt beautiful with her fine pale hair blown like a cloud about her face. In the old days, in moments like this, men had not resisted her.

At this flashing remembrance of past victories another light, silvery laugh escaped her, and then she began her maneuvers on the youth—all those little tricks of brain and gesture that had brought men to her feet. In all she said she wove the theme of love—loves that she had inspired, loves that she had known. As she talked she laughed repeatedly the practised laugh that was like little bells that the vaudeville artists shake in their fingers to make music. So strong was her appeal, so ethereal the wickedness offered, that the man in front of her became lit up by the sudden flames of her intention. The black eyes, apparently half-asleep, awoke and smoldered with passion; the sensuous red lips closed in a line of cruelty, and the delicate breast heaved.

Noting the effect of her magic and fascinated by the sudden awakening of this strange, impassive creature, Célestine, with the furtive movement of one who has only to be cautious to bag his game, again bent forward, this time throwing back her head so that her face, bathed in the moonlight, might further enchant him.

For one instant she conquered. The oars were stilled and the black eyes were drinking in this pale, elusive beauty that melted all his being. Then, in a flash, he was in control of himself; the full-bred Oriental; angry and defiant that he had been thus trapped to be meted out insult. As she fascinated she now sickened and repelled; all his

unconsciously retained Buddhistic ideas; all his supreme superstitions as to chastity of the soul; all his love of the true and the beautiful; his loyalty to truth and courage that had been dealt a deadly blow, awoke and came to his aid.

Célestine, misconstruing these emotions that had so quickly followed her awakening, was smiling a cold, sensuous smile of feminine triumph. It was not misdirected, for in the very moment of his supreme strength, the Japanese, moved by the smile of this strange woman who looked as though she had been carved out of the moon, whose very whiteness was a dangerous challenge, was again attacked by a spasm of weakness, followed by fear. But once more, although with greater effort, he conquered, and with that instinct of his people to resist power, if not in open war, then with an unfailing underthrust, he bent forward and hissed in a low voice:

"I not want you—you pretty, but you withered, rose!"

The arrow penetrated; a low, sharp cry escaped Célestine, and the next moment her face was in her hands and she was sobbing hysterically, all her nervous energy thus exhausting itself in a kind of fury of failure. A sick feeling of repugnance of self passed over her as she presently lifted her face and looked wearily about her.

A black cloud had covered the moon; the lake was in darkness and the sudden breeze, now stronger, seemed to wrap her in a wet, icy shroud.

Tochigi was rowing rapidly for the shore. Not a word was spoken between them, and when they alighted finally, she stood like a statue again bathed in moonlight while he tied the boat. Then, still in silence, they approached the great blazing hotel. At the entrance the Japanese raised his hat, pressed the other hand to his breast, bowed very low and left her. She followed him with her eyes, the youthful beauty that had eluded her stinging her for a moment like the lash of a whip. Then she entered the crowded rotunda where the music was still playing, where

flowers bloomed, and jewels flashed on the forms of lovely women, most of whom were attended by husbands or lovers.

Instinctively she walked over to the elevator, awaiting the descent of the car. When it arrived she entered with others and was borne silently upward.

III

ON entering her room the feeling of repugnance of self, born of failure, changed to self-pity, and sudden hot tears gushed to her eyes. She stood still, like one in a trance, even in the privacy of her own apartment feeling contemptuous gazes upon her.

Through an open door she could see rows of dresses lining the entire sides of the walls, the wardrobe maid having drawn the silken draperies that covered them during the day in order to give them, as though they had been human beings, fresh air. To Célestine, in this moment, they represented so many exulting, mocking women. She entered the room, tore several of them down and trampled on them. They had cost her piles of money; hours of weary, racking time—she had an attendant for them—and they had failed her. Finally, she took her seat in the high, straight-back chair that the French girl sat in, all day sometimes, with her needle, and beheld all these passionless garments, contrived to excite passion, with despair and hatred of all they stood for and the life they had been a part of.

Tochigi's suite was diagonally opposite her own, and as she sat thus she heard his light step in the hall and the soft closing of his door. Then she rose with the manner and movements of an invalid and returned to the other room.

An intense silence reigned and the sound of Tochigi's low voice speaking in his own language to his servant reached her through the open transoms. The voice both irritated and excited her. Her small hands clenched; she wanted to burst into his apartment and

get her fingers around his throat. In another moment she was overpowered by an acute infatuation, and, putting out her arms, she staggered towards her closed door. When she reached it she paused and pressed her forehead to the white panel and remained thus. The moisture of the lake clung to her; her white garment fell limp; her fine hair was disheveled, and the thin, sickly face, between the meshes, was pale and a bit distorted as though all its beauty had been wrung out.

After a while the merry voices of a party of people, possibly over-wined, each, in her imagination, entering upon the wonders of the night, reached her. She raised her head and listened, hearing her own voice of the past in the woman's tremulous, hysterical, rippling laughter.

The desire for murder was still upon her—the impulse to destroy and stand

triumphant over havoc. Destruction had been the pastime of her existence, and all her victims seemed rising up to mock her.

She raised her arms, which trembled, and cowered back from the vision and stood thus a full moment. Then she gave a quick start, tossed her head, flashed her pale, bluish eyes on the dimly lit room, and snapped her fingers lightly. Approaching a table, she emptied a powder from a silver vial upon the tip of her tongue, standing afterwards with closed eyes, like a somnambulist.

The maid entered and caught sight of her thus.

"Madame has again taken the powder!" she cried, breathless.

But Célestine remained motionless and made no reply. Already she was the central figure of a vision in which Yejiro Tochigi was powerless.



A GIRL IN THE CROWD

By Hortense Flexner

I SAW her pass and said, "The flame of her
Will not outlive my glance." So fragile, proud,
And spendthrift young she burned along the crowd,
A darting thing of rose and gold and myrrh,
Riding the day's glad wonder with a spur.
The motion of her was a running cloud,
Her promise all new leaves and fields fresh-plowed,
Mocking the narrow ways she left astir.
As if a wild-plum tree, some April noon,
Should wake and fling its bounty to the air
Beside an age-wise ruin, with creepers grown,
Trace on that mold its light and shadow rune,
So young against the wall—and yet aware
How in one hour, it had outlived the stone.



A WOMAN picks out her bridesmaids when a man steals a kiss the second time.

THE PURIST

By John Cournos

HE was one of those fastidiously clean men with whom cleanliness and neatness are a passion, and a pastime.

There was a sense of balance about him. His hair was carefully parted in the middle, or as near the middle as one could do it without the aid of a T-square; his moustache, a trifle à la Kaiser Wilhelm, likewise maintained an astonishing equilibrium that made one wonder; even his eyebrows impressed one with their more than casual acquaintance with the comb.

The pungent odor of a recent shampoo radiated from him. His face, ruddy and healthy, was suspiciously redolent of a fresh massage.

He seemed altogether like a man satisfied with himself and his appearance.

As he sat down at the restaurant table he very carefully pulled up his trousers to preserve the immaculate creases from relenting of their rigid course.

He gave himself a cursory examination, and picking off a white thread from his neat gray coat let it fall, with a dainty movement of his fingers, into the cuspidor.

Presently the waiter came to take his order, which the man gave with a clear, distinct pronunciation, as though he hated impurities even in the language.

Having satisfied himself that the tablecloth was clean, he gave his attention to the table napkins. One of these he tucked inside his collar.

With the other napkin he scrupulously wiped the utensils—one by one—the plate, the fork, the spoons; the most fastidious housewife could not have gone about it with greater zealously.

I, who watched him out of the corner of my eye, detected in my vis-a-vis a secret look of admiration he gave his handiwork. The shine of the utensils was reflected in his eye.

My own eye, however, was the next moment arrested by something else. The waiter who was bringing the man's order on a tray had just passed through the swinging door leading from the kitchen and as he did so he collided with another waiter, which caused some of the food on the tray to aviate, to wit: a leg of chicken, some leaves of lettuce, and several slices of bread. The waiter quickly put down the tray on a nearby table, and casting a surreptitious eye around the room—the restaurant was nearly deserted at the time—picked up the articles from the floor, brushed them off with his fingers, put them back on the tray and smoothed them down carefully; having completed this renovating operation, he brought the things to my man across the table who was sweetly oblivious to what had happened.

A terrible moral responsibility devolved upon me. Should I permit this very clean man to eat this unclean food? I wished to tell him, but couldn't—it would have been cruel to disillusionize him!

And so, thanks to my cowardice, he ate the meal with great relish, consuming the chicken with the easy facility of the perfect eating artist that he was.

He called for the finger bowl. It was a joy to watch him.

He gave the waiter a handsome tip; and when he paid his bill my observant eye made note of the fact that he did it out of a roll of perfectly new and clean notes, apparently just drawn from the bank.

MARIUS EN SEINE

By Jacques Nayral

Marius était venu à Paris se reposer des fatigues de la grande vie phocéenne. Quand nous lui proposâmes de nous accompagner, le dimanche suivant, dans une partie de pêche, à Villennes, il eut un sourire de pitié :

—Allons donc ! Il y a des poissons dans cette rigole ?

Il désignait ainsi la Seine.

—S'il y a des poissons dans la Seine ? nous rebiffâmes-nous. Mais certainement : des gardons, des brêmes, des barbillons...

—Tê, qu'est-ce que c'est que tout cela !

Et Marius nous conta, pour la dixième fois, l'histoire du requin qu'il avait vu tirer du bassin de la Joliette. Même, depuis sa dernière narration, le requin s'était allongé d'un mètre. Au prochain récit, sans doute, ce requin serait une baleine.

Toutefois, pour ne pas nous désobliger, Marius consentit à venir pêcher à Villennes.

—Vous savez, au moins ? s'enquit Lucien.

Marius le regarda de côté, les yeux gouailleurs, les épaules hautes, sans daigner répondre.

—C'est que, continua Lucien, nous pêchons en bateau, et si quelquefois...

Cette insistance offensa Marius. S'il savait nager ! Mais ces *gens* de Paris ignoraient donc que les enfants de la Cannebière savent nager en venant au monde ? Cela est si vrai que, à peine sont-ils nés, on se contente, pour les nettoyer, de les jeter dans le bassin du port et d'aller les y chercher une heure après. Pas de danger qu'ils enfoncent !

* *

Le dimanche arriva. La Seine, sous

le soleil, étincelait de mille vaguelettes courtes, brillantes comme des facettes de métal.

Marius, lui, étincelait de verve ; les bons mots et les galéjades partaient de lui comme des fusées.

Sa gaieté n'eut plus de bornes lorsqu'il vit le bateau qui devait servir à notre expédition :

—Mais ce n'est pas un bateau, criait-il. C'est un panier à poissons, c'est une barcelonnette à faire dormir les petits gars. Jamais un homme n'entrera là-dedans.

Nous y tinmes pourtant, à cinq, et je crus voir qu'en y entrant, ce brave Marius réprimait l'exubérance de ses gestes au point de paraître prudent.

La pêche commença, miraculeuse. Tout le poisson de la Seine semblait s'être réuni là, en assemblée générale, pour donner un démenti à ce mauvais plaisant de Marius, qui niait son existence. Les gardons, les brêmes de forte taille, de superbes carpes s'accrochaient bénévolement au bout de nos lignes.

Notre Marseillais ne pêchait pas. Un homme qui a pêché le thon ne va pas s'amuser, n'est-ce pas, à "tremper du fil dans l'eau" pour retirer de la friture. Il se contentait de nous regarder et de se réjouir à nos dépens.

—Té ! disait-il avec un étonnement feint, chaque fois qu'un de nous exhibait orgueilleusement une belle pièce ; ze n'aurais pas cru, quand même, qu'il y avait tant de sardines dans cette rigole.

Ce "débinage" continu, à la fin, exaspérait Lucien, le moins patient de la bande. Il jetait de côté des regards irrités sur le joyeux camarade ; on devinait qu'en son for il lui souhaitait quelque mésaventure.

Une alerte. La sirène d'un remorqueur a retenti non loin. Garons-nous.

Mais Marius éclate de rire.

—Se garer? Hé! de quoi, donc? De cette coquille de noix?

Marius, d'abord, ne veut pas croire que l'hélice provoque un remous capable de culbuter notre bachot. Mais quand il est convaincu que nous ne plaisantons pas, il se tapit, un peu pâle, au fond du bateau, et ne bouge plus, en expliquant:

—Garons-nous, diantre! Il ne faut pas rejeter vos sardines dans la rigole.

Aïe! Lucien, qui tient un aviron, a fait une fausse manœuvre. En deux temps, nous sommes soulevés par le remous du remorqueur, renversés, culbutés. Suave qui peut!

Maintenant, sur la rive, nous nous ébrouons, et tout en riant de la mésaventure—inutile de se désoler, n'est-ce pas?—voici que nous nous étonnons de ne pas entendre ce farceur de Marius railler notre maladresse. Où diable est-il, le joyeux Marius? A-t-il abordé sur l'autre rive?

Mais non, sapristi: ce point noir, accroché on ne sait comment à la quille du bachot retourné, c'est lui. Parfaitement, c'est notre Marseillais; il se cramponne à l'épave, et nous entendons sa voix étranglée qui crie:

—Au secours! mille dious, au secours!

Ah! ça, mais, il ne sait donc pas nager?

En hâte, deux d'entre nous replongent dans l'eau. Ils se dépêchent, ils atteignent Marius, ils l'empoignent chacun

d'un côté, le ramènent, le déposent sur la berge. On le déshabille et on le frictionne.

Plus de peur que de mal, heureusement. Marius est bientôt sur pied, et il répète, maussade:

—Quelle bêtise, boun dious! Quelle bêtise!

Mais on ne sait de quelle bêtise il parle, ni à qui il la reproche.

*

* *

Il est midi, le soleil a rapidement séché nos habits de toile. Nous allons déjeuner dans une guinguette. Marius a reconquis sa bonne humeur. Le petit vin blanc qui accompagne l'obligatoire matelote l'emoustille, et il recommence ses facéties.

—Eh bien, ricane-t-il, où sont vos sardines, té? Vous les avez noyées, bougres de maladroits.

—En fait de noyade, lance Lucien, qui décidément a une rancune contre Marius, vous l'avez échappée belle, vous. Je croyais que vous nagiez comme un poisson?

Mais le Marseillais ne se démonte pas.

Pauvres marins d'eau douce que nous sommes, il nous écrase de sa supériorité, lui, le fils de la Méditerranée. Il agite les bras pour exprimer qu'il a besoin d'un large espace, et il riposte, avec un *assent triomphant*:

—Si ze sais nazer? Té, comment veux-tu que ze naze dans cette rigole? On ne peut pas faire un mouvement sans se cogner contre les bords.



AL que tiene mujer hermosa, ó castillo en frontera, ó viña en carrera, nunca le falta guerra.



WHEN GREEK MEETS GRANVILLE

By George Jean Nathan

I AM disposed to regard outdoor drama as of a kidney with indoor baseball. That such dubious things have existed and do exist I stand, if surprised from the rear, ready to admit; but else, though the antiquarian evangelists of both forms of bizarrerie marshal a magnum of facts against me, I affirm I shall to my dying day stoutly deny the probability of any such existence.

Fresh from a vision of the benevolent Mr. Granville Barker's dramatic Fresh Air Fund in the divers university stadia, I am inspired to record the impression that it seems as logical and "educational" to play Euripides out-of-doors (merely because Euripides was originally played thus) as it would be to compel students to glimpse the Homeric epics off goat-skin merely because they were originally transcribed upon goat-skin. The entire business is still another illuminating commentary first, on the extravagant and transparent tomfooleries with which this Mr. Barker has been fetching the impressible American public (Mr. Barker was sharp enough to produce both "Iphigenia" and "The Trojan Women" *indoors* in his less buncombe-swallowing London); second, on the inappropriateness and comic futility of al fresco drama as a whole; and third and finally, on that class of persons which accepts any such slaughter of Greek drama as a post-impressionist Roman holiday.

That the ancient Greeks gave matinées of Euripides, when they gave them at all, only on cloudy days, days when the heavens were sad and sullen, and that their best effect with his dramas was, after all, achieved by night

with the glaring fringe of torches, should in some measure cool the whoopings of the professors for these modern Greek daylight shows.

That the drama, of whatever sort, cannot endure in the sun is, of course, a fact already deeply appreciated. The test of all art is the light of day. The drama cannot stand the light of day. Hence the drama is not an art. Beethoven's effect is as positive in the open Prater at high noon as in the darkened Hofoperntheater by night. Velasquez's "Adoration of the Shepherds," with the hard light streaming in upon it through the windows of the National Gallery of London, produces its mood as positively, as genuinely, as when, later, the great hall darkens and the soft flow of electricity falls more gently upon it. Michelangelo's marble David of the Signoria, by sun or by moon, is the same. These are in the corral of art. Now, imagine "*Rosmersholm*" at ten o'clock some morning in Bronx Park!

The drama, in so far as its written self is concerned, is of course another—and a finer—thing. But as for acted drama, acted drama is to written drama as a talkative woman is to a subdued and wistful one.

The acted drama prospers in proportion to the artificiality and unreality of its immediate surroundings. Hence, to essay a projection of acted drama on a dazzling football gridiron with, across the tops of the bleachers, a prospect of innumerable Olus Underwear and Campbell's Soup ads. betwitching the eyeball, is to essay a task at once asquint and impeachable. Such extramural impresarios as Mr. Ben Greet and the Coburn players, accepting the

outdoor performance at its one and only true value, to wit, as a means for diddling money out of good-natured, culture-currying yokels, are sufficiently slick generally to give their performances in groves. These groves not only tend to soften the searching light which otherwise would make of tragedy's cloak a motley, but also in the audience's eye so mix up the actors with the trees that the audience is led subtly to imagine the actors are less wooden than they are.

Mr. Barker approaches the Greek drama as he approaches Shakespeare. Not as one who admires and respects and appreciates a noble dramatic text, but as a saucy college-boy who elects a course in the classics solely for the familiar opportunity it will afford him to put impudent questions to his tutor. What the milk bath was to Anna Held and the left hook to the Poillon sisters, the Greek drama and Shakespeare are to Barker. In his work with the classics, he occupies the same relation to an artist that Sarah Bernhardt's wooden leg occupies to histrionic talent. Unfortunately, there are few who choose to discriminate in the matter of such ratios and so we have the spectacle of Barker's canonization in much the same way that next autumn we shall enjoy a stunning and hysterical discharge of critical nougat over the French actress, not, mind you, because she is an actress and an artist of possibly high rank, but because she is an actress and an artist with only one leg!

Mr. Ed. Howe, viewing the situation in his piquant journal, recently cast remarks that are worth recalling, even if, in this particular critical article, they may appear somewhat irrelevant. Observed he, "It is said that the determination of Bernhardt to rise superior to old age and bodily disfigurement, is 'magnificent,' but it is really ridiculous. A woman of more than seventy appearing in girl parts, and stumping around on a wooden leg, will be as pitiful as it is to see a wrinkled and stout woman of similar

age dress in the finery of young people and appear among young people at their amusements. The young people would make fun of such an old woman, and the world will make fun of Bernhardt. Her performances now will not be creditable to art; they will not be inspired by love of art, but by love of money and applause. It is said that nothing makes men and women so unhappy as to lose the public favor after having once enjoyed it. Bernhardt's ridiculous attempt to come back at an age when she should have the charitable attention of children and friends, is the foolish resolve of a stubborn old woman who will not realize her age and feebleness. The few who go to see Bernhardt as an actress now will be inspired by curiosity, as people who go to see the mummy of Rameses in the museum at Cairo in Egypt."

To return to the case of Mr. Barker. It has been said of him—and in considerable part the statement is true—that he enjoys a perfectly open mind so far as the drama and the theater are concerned. The leading difficulty with Mr. Barker's mind, however, would seem to be that it is so darned open that every wild, crazy theatrical idea gets into it. And, once in, squats. As a consequence, he presents us in his treatment of the classic drama with a mixture of Bakst, Reinhardt, the Butterick Patterns, May Manton, Gordon Craig and the Nonpareil Wall-Paper Company. His production of "Iphigenia in Tauris" in the Yale Bowl, with its procession of grotesque costumes by one Wilkinson, accordingly reminded the spectators of nothing quite so much as a five-year reunion parade of the class of 1910. Certainly, if it be a legitimate enterprise to "sell" Greek drama by such controvertible means, so were it then a nobby bit of trade likewise to create a stir among the book-agents by getting out a new edition of the Bible with a Penryhn Stanlaws cover and a jacket containing the reprint of a favorable criticism by Jeanette Gilder.

That it is the local tradition habitual-

ly to mistake novelties for ideas is of course a circumstance intimately appreciated. Thus, the native slang, "I've got a great idea for a play," when translated, is found generally to mean that the enthusiastic individual has merely given birth to some such superficially fresh but equally immaterial notion as a play the scene of one of whose acts is laid in a Turkish bath. It is undoubtedly to the well-nigh unanimous American acceptance of this theory that Mr. Barker has attained to eminence in our community—and to some extent, in his own. But, even now, I catch symptoms of a coming-to, a where-am-I, an awakening, on the part of our populace. True, by many of the daily journalists the gentleman is still regarded with the awe that is ever born of puzzlement, the veneration that flourishes always in this country for the dealer in the latest spectacular quackery, the doler out of the latest persuasive physic, the vender of the most recent bolus; and true, we encounter still such intermezzi as those composed by one Harrison Smith in *The Bookman* in the general pitch of "inspiration," "genius" and the like—but, as I say, even so there are already straws which begin to show that Mr. Barker will shortly take his place in the pew of passé American fads along with the white slave, Phyllis Neilson-Terry, the Kneipp Cure, the Belasco details, Friedmann's tuberculosis cure, the Princess Theater as an American Guignol and Antoine, Schlatterism, Augustus Thomas, flannel stomach bands, hair-growing tonics, Bergson, September Morn, the girls in the Florodora sextette, the ballads of Charles K. Harris, umbilicular contemplation, the idea that George Bernard Shaw spoke only paradoxes, witchcraft, the divining rod, Elsie Siegel, Thomas W. Lawson, the monarchical abduction of Gaby Deslys, the invincibility of Yale athletic teams and the idea that all Harvard men were sissies, the efficacy of rubber shoes in wet weather, the bustle, Dowie, the Mann act, free silver, malicious animal magnetism, mental healing, physicians,

patent pocket cigar lighters, advanced coffees, the theory that personality was one thing and effective histrionism another, the idea that musical comedies were immoral (instead of merely stupid) and the coincident idea that girls' legs were devilish, the power of suggestion, French drama, table-tapping, root beer, Arnold Bennett's genius, Mrs. Fiske, Stanley Houghton, psychological phenomena (chiefly, dual personality), sex hygiene, eugenics, the brutality of football, "The Turtle," anti-vivisection, the buildings at the Philadelphia Centennial, the wickedness of the hoochee-koochee, Esperanto, cubist art, futurist art, Hanlon Brothers' last act transformations, Maeterlinck's symbolism, the Montessori method, the British battleship "Audacious" and Anna Held's eyes, the segregation of vice, the fortune-making possibilities in gold mines and moving pictures, the bicycle, Maxine Elliott's beauty, the Katzenjammer Kids, "Three Weeks," Home-run Baker, Isadora Duncan, the belief that every time you crossed the Channel you were sure to be seasick, the maxixe, the phaeton, men's hair cut round at the back, Frankie Bailey's limbs, suspenders and the single standard of sex, the animal and geographical discoveries in the wilderness by Theodore Roosevelt, Richard Mansfield's temperament, the freak clothes worn by Eleanor Sears, the New York Herald, "Damaged Goods" and the pure uncommercial purpose of Richard Bennett, the superiority of Franz Lehar to Victor Herbert, the philosophies of Andrew Carnegie, Bonnie McGinn, gray ties and waistcoats with dinner jackets, advanced vaudeville and Billy Sunday.

It has, indeed, been a month of farce. For, in addition to Mr. Barker's outdoor dramas, we have had "She's In Again," an adaptation from the French, "A Full House," an adaptation from Munsey's Magazine, and "The Three of Hearts," an adaptation from Bobbs-Merrill. The first-named specimen, the naturalization of which

is credited to Thomas J. Gray, is of the "So this is Lakewood!" school of farce. Its other virgin and distinguishing characteristics include the assigning to one bedroom of a couple who are mistaken for man and wife; a merry jest to the effect that a young doctor cannot reasonably expect to make a lot of money right away and that it is necessary for him, in order to do so, to have patients; references to Kalamazoo and Flatbush; and, upon the occasion of one character bidding a second character good-night, the ejaculation by the latter of good-NIGHT.

The fun of the traffic begins with the spectacle of an actor endeavoring to deport himself like a smart man-about-town. After the audience has subsided, the plot is permitted to get under sail and in rapid succession the spectators are convulsed with a pageant of ladies taking one drink and becoming instantaneously intoxicated, gentlemen falling backward upon sofas, ladies fainting suddenly in the arms of perspiring gentlemen and being dragged flopping from the stage, gentlemen in pajamas below the waists and evening coats above, ladies in gentlemen's night apparel, and gentlemen throwing ladies over their shoulders and bearing them kicking and screaming from the scene. The dialogue is excellent. Says one character to Aubrey Brighton, the leading personage, "Why do they call you Mr. Brighton?" Retorts the leading personage, very wittily, "Because I was born at Brighton Beach." Again, says one character to Aubrey, "Why do they call your aunt Miss Raynor?" Whereupon retorts Aubrey, rather cleverly, "Because she always used to like to go out in the rain." The superior punch, however, comes at the very end of the evening and consists in displaying momentarily to the gaze of the audience a young woman seated in a bathtub. *Seated*, observe. Now, if the orchestra had only struck up "The Star-Spangled Banner"

"A Full House," evolved by Frederick Jackson from a story designed by that indefatigable arch-plotter, the Rev.

Robert H. Davis, is, though of familiar mien, an amiable roughhouse. Basically, the piece belongs to the academy of farce represented by "Seven Days," "Stop Thief," "Officer 666" and kindred engagements with policemen, crooks, tipsy servant girls, crawlings under tables, impassioned stairway climbing and the like. "The Three of Hearts," done out of a fiction of Harold MacGrath by Martha Morton, is an unconscious revival of "Are You A Crook?", a dolorous attempt at satire which was mounted on the local platform a couple of years ago. It is equally inauspicious. The traffic presents us with the usual gentleman thief, the stolen necklace that turns out to have been paste, the romantic baggage who admires heroic criminals, the droll allusion to the Ford automobile, the comic Japanese valet, the heavy-witted Central Office detective, the over-important and fussy country constable, the midnight thunderstorm that prevents the man and the girl from leaving the deserted house and getting back home—thus compromising the girl, the ex-convict who tries sincerely to reform and the odds against him, the Southern colonel with his elaborate idea of chivalry, the revolver shot and the hero's cool wrapping up of his hand with a nonchalant "It's only a scratch," the hero's magnanimous sending of the misled youth to his ranch in Texas—"It'll make a man of you, my boy,"—the youth's impulsive grasping of the hero's hand with "You're dead square, Mr. Hamilton, that's what you are, dead square. I'm ashamed of myself, ashamed of what I've done. I promise you you won't regret what you've done; you won't be disappointed in me in the future," etc., etc.

Gramercy to Wilhelm von Brady for his vastly entertaining season of Gilbert and Sullivan! Also, by the relevant way, have ever those students of drama who were wont to blow sardonic peas at George Cohan for his grand-old-flagging paused to reflect upon a similar business in "Pinafore," in "The Pirates of Penzance," in "Tolanthe"? And so

to "A Modern Eve" which, though departed this life some four weeks ago, still points a moral.

A summer music show is only as strong as its least good-looking girl. A summer music show, to succeed, may do without smooth tunes and brisk dialogue, but it cannot do without pinchable flappers. A show of this sort must stand on the legs of its chorus. And the test of a chorus in this direction lies in whether or not it can wear white stockings. The chorus of "A Modern Eve" wore white stockings. It couldn't. This, reason number 1 to 100 inclusive for the failure of the bean festival. Reason No. 101: When the first curtain rose, this chorus was upon the stage; title of the ballad this chorus was singing: "The Song of the Sirens"!

But let us proceed with the moral. Reason No. 102, suffragette wife. No. 103, henpecked husband. No. 104, final turning of husbandly worm. No. 105, song called "When Love Comes Stealing In" with a quartette of sweet thirty-five-year-old cupids aiming bows and arrows at prima donna. No. 106, said prima donna blinking eyes to heighten pathos of the ballad. No. 107, early La Salle Theater period first act finale with ensemble in irrelevant Louis XV garb. No. 108, "Is that man a friend of yours? No, he's my husband." No. 109, grand free-for-all pronunciation contest by ensemble of such cast names as the Baroness de la Roche Taille, Count Castell-Vajour, Justin Pontgirard and Renée Cascadier. No. 110, exhibition by a couple of "international dancers."

The summer Winter Garden bolero bears the name "The Passing Show of 1915" and eloquently parades the true calibre of Mr. George V. Hobart's modern morality, "Experience," by trying to burlesque it and finding that the thing simply cannot be done. Indeed, in his effort to make game of the Hobart gem, the librettist Atteridge finds himself in the probably unwelcome and surprising position of having actually written a more serious and

withal a more creditable piece of work than that he sought to travesty. Mr. Atteridge's libretto, therefore, proves obliquely that Mr. Hobart is an estimable caricaturist—even though Mr. Hobart be modestly unconscious of his talent in this direction.

Lest the reader be seized with the low comedy notion that I am here making statement in irony, and that the Winter Garden spoof version of "Experience" does not actually result in a sounder piece of writing than the original, let me register the facts. In the original, a character intended to symbolize Youth is made to travel over the road of early life and to meet with the divers travails and temptations which young men are supposed conventionally to encounter. Each of these travails and temptations Mr. Hobart's Youth takes seriously, dramatically. And, in the main, the approach of Mr. Hobart's Youth to these travails and temptations is an approach studied, timid and overly cautious. Is this the attitude and the approach of youth? For example, in Mr. Hobart's piece, the Youth character greets a vista of the promiscuous city, with its thousand beckoning golden glimmers, not as an inviting and a hopeful avenue of adventure, enterprise and fortune but (see Scene II) as a vista of vacillation. Thus, in Mr. Hobart's play (see Scenes V, VI, VII, etc.), the Youth figure is ever sorry for himself, never blindly valiant, never dreaming stubborn dreams, never still stabbing at the world with a pen-knife. In a word, to come more quickly to cases, Mr. Hobart's Youth is not so much Youth traveling the highroad of life (as Mr. Hobart tells us he is) as an actor traveling through some nine or ten extravagantly sentimental, obvious and illogical vaudeville sketches. What we have, therefore, is less the pilgrimage of youth than a pilgrimage of Sullivan and Considine one-act plays.

Consider, on the other hand, Mr. Atteridge's burlesque. The superior logical quality of the latter must be at once apparent when one considers that

the librettist shows Youth, in his almost every adventure, laughing, singing, rashly unthinking of consequences, without a much more serious thought in his head than to dress up like a sophomore, chase the girls and act like a darn fool generally. To Mr. Atteridge's Youth there is no such thing as tragedy. To him, the world is pink. To him, time valueless. According to Mr. Hobart, Youth must inevitably pass through the vocation of waiter in a Bowery dive (Scene VI) and the desire to sniff cocaine (Scene VIII) before he is able to achieve manhood. Which manhood, also according to Mr. Hobart, invariably consists in giving up the struggle of life and settling down in a village (Scene X). Not so with the keener-visioned Atteridge. No such bogus stuffs for him. Atteridge, in his burlesque, employs the circular dramatic construction to be found in Brieux, *et al.*, and permits his Youth to bring up practically where he started—married, to be sure, and therefore still with his lessons of life to learn.

Aside from the point which I have made in the above paragraphs, the features of the Winter Garden Entertainment are the delectable Pritchard (for a complete, scholarly and understanding analysis of the sorceries of the lady send to this office for a copy of *THE SMART SET* for May), a scene called "The Hawaiian Baths" in which the chorus misses appear in their natural ziegfelds, a colorful ballet participated in by the agile Theodore Kosloff, several excursions over the runway, and George Munroe. Mr. Munroe appears fully clothed.

* * *

In this place, a word or two on the subject of motion pictures. What has happened? Just as the motion pictures were becoming well established, along comes a company which presents at the Astor Theater "The Alien," a combination of moving pictures and acted drama. If anything is destined to kill the interest in moving pictures it is the bringing into the moving pictures of acted drama. Look what the

acted drama did to the acted drama! One of the chief charms of the moving pictures has been their element of silent drama. This undoubtedly accounts for the crowds they have presto'd away from the spoken drama. Consider, then, what must happen when this specialized charm is invaded. Can it be that Messrs. Klaw and Erlanger, the Shuberts and the other theatrical managers are working in dark ways the theatergoing public to re-create?

Another thing. In several of the motion-picture playhouses the films are interrupted by high and lofty singing performances on the part of professional vocalists. Is this not another devastating procedure? Let the moving-picture impresarios consider well what havoc singing wrought in the instance of musical comedy. Let them ponder on what happened to those musical pieces in which last sang Schumann-Heink and Fritzi Scheff and Louise Gunning. In musical plays, the public wants legs, not singing. In motion pictures, not singing, but motion pictures.

Still another thing. Observe, old dear, this excerpt from a criticism of the film version of Wilkie Collins' "Moonstone," clipped casually from a theatrical weekly: "The scenario appears to have been adapted from a magazine story of the type that one finds in the popular fiction magazines. It is all old-fashioned melodrama. The theme has served for years, whenever an author has felt the lure of the Far East after reading Kipling."

Thus it would appear, to quote my esteemed medical colleague, that so far as the drama is concerned, there is hope.

* * *

The large numismatical success of Florenz Ziegfeld in the field of the music show is in marked degree due to the circumstance that he divides his primary appeal not between the ears and eyes, as do the majority of his compatriots, but between the eyes alone. He appreciates that the American eye is ever mightier than the American ear. He appreciates that a Gilbert lyric is as

nothing against a shapely torso. He appreciates that a Lehar roulade is as nothing against a bonny face.

He realizes, does Ziegfeld, that in the theater or out of the theater, it is always, or almost always, the eye—rarely the ear—that casts the ballot. It is not, for instance, what Roosevelt says that wins him the mob sympathy; it is what Roosevelt looks. It is not, for example, what Jack London writes that causes him to be remarked as a “manly” and a “red-blooded” author; it is that photograph with the soft collar. He realizes, does Ziegfeld, that what lifted Bryan out of his pristine obscurity was not what Bryan said, but the Prince Albert and black string tie that Bryan wore. That what made a fortune for Dr. Munyon was not his advertisements or his remedies, but the circumstance that Munyon looked like the public’s idea of a doctor. (Would this Munyon have made so much had he looked like, say, Eddie Foy?) He realizes, does Ziegfeld, that Augustus Thomas is hailed by the public as the dean of American playwrights, not because he actually is the dean of American playwrights, but because he looks a great deal more like what the dean of American playwrights should look than, for instance, Edward Sheldon or Otto Hauerbach. He appreciates that the public buys a magazine not for what good literature may be in it, but for the fancy picture on its cover; that the public is pro-English and anti-German because tall, straight Kitchener looks a whole lot handsomer in his uniform than short, dumpy von Hindenburg does in his; and that the public knows Annette Kellerman is a great diver because it has had a look at her in a one-piece bathing suit. And, realizing and appreciating this, Mr. Ziegfeld has been sufficiently astute to capitalize the public emotion.

What the result? The eye, attending one of the “Follies” productions, is so blandished and enticed by a sagaciously picked quorum of girls that it forgets completely that an ear is its neighbor. Indeed, is reminded of the

propinquity and existence of an ear only when an eye in the next seat exclaims, “Say, Adolph. lamp the á la Maryland on the left end!”

According to the professors,* we possess 32,820 qualities of visual sensation, qualities all equally elemental as sensations however diverse the physical stimuli with which they are connected. As opposed to these figures, we are able to discriminate but some 550 qualities of simple noise. Thus, albeit somewhat obliquely, do we glimpse the vastly greater fertility and importance of the eye over the ear as an organ for music show appeal. The capacity of the eye is, approximately, six times as great as that of the ear—for pleasure or for pain. The latter problem is the producer’s. And, truth to tell, it is not so difficult a problem as one might lead himself to imagine. It is patently less troublesome to gratify the eye than the ear. A music lover may tear his hair in agony at the spectacle of a fat soprano invading Richard Strauss where he may rest soothed and calm before the spectacle of a Lillian Lorraine bombarding Irving Berlin.

Ziegfeld agrees with Jules Lemaitre that when one knows how to look at a ballet, one forgets to listen to the orchestra; one mind would not be sufficient at one time for two orders of sensations so subtle and so strong. He agrees with Lemaitre that legs and tights are elements of expression which should not be disdained. He agrees, in short, with Hilaire André Beauchois Verdlét Gaston de Revencourt that “when one goes to a theater to see a musical play, one goes to *see* a musical play—not to hear one.”

In the latest “Follies” Mr. Ziegfeld reveals anew an eye-meal. The manufacture of the show—certainly the best thus far in the series—is the work of Messrs. Rennold Wolf, Channing Pollock and Eugene Buck.

* E. Mach, “Contributions to the Analysis of Sensations,” 1897. *Zeitschrift f. Psychol. u. Physiol. d. Sinnesorgane*, 1896-7 (Müller) *Sensations of Tone* (1895) pp. 145 ff. *Physiol. d. Gehörs*, ch. ii.

THE SAWDUST TRAIL

By H. L. Mencken

WINSTON CHURCHILL'S latest and thickest confection, "A FAR COUNTRY" (Macmillan), at once challenges comparison with Theodore Dreiser's "The Titan," for both deal with the conflict between the Uplift and the Invisible Government in These States, and in each the central figure is a gentleman who serves the latter with skill and daring, and who grows rich by the business. But there the similarity ends, and thereafter all the odds are in favor of "The Titan." It is only, indeed, by reading the Churchill book that one attains, retrospectively, to the true measure of the Dreiser book. Churchill, of course, knows how to write, and, what is more, he has a first-hand knowledge of the conflict he is here writing of. But when all is said, how superficial his facility, how cocksure and platitudinous his philosophy, how polite and trivial his drama, how puny and unconvincing his Hugh Paget beside the sweating, mole-like meticulousness, the remote and cautious detachment, the stupendous play of blind forces, the sinister and gargantuan Frank Cowperwood of Dreiser! It is the difference between a fairy tale and an epic, Moszkowski and Brahms, the First Symphony and the Ninth. Churchill is content to skim the surface of things; he really tells us precious little, for all his 509 pages, about the inner workings of the System he is exposing; in truth, he really tells us very little about Paget, his hero, for the man's fundamental concepts and motives remain tantalizingly vague at the end. But Dreiser, in his crude, blundering way, plows down to the very bottom of things. He reduces the

combat, like John Galsworthy in "Strife," to its elementals; he makes it thrilling and intelligible by blowing away its smoke. And as for Cowperwood, he puts into that Colossus the very breath and bloom of life.

The relative failure of Mr. Churchill, I take it, is due chiefly to the wholly illogical, and hence more or less incredible, *volte-face* that he imposes upon his hero at the end. I have no doubt that there are corporation lawyers who have succumbed to early piety and gone over to the Uplift, just as there are possibly French lieutenants who have succumbed to Pilsener and *Schwartenmagen* and gone over to the Germans, but it is surely as absurd to depict the Money Power through the eyes of the one as it would be to depict the French Army through the eyes of the other. And having thus erred capitally in the plan of his story, Mr. Churchill proceeds to err in its execution by ascribing Paget's conversion to influences which so sharp-witted and strong-willed a man would obviously resist as a primary condition of his strength and sagacity. One cannot be a realist today and a sentimentalist to-morrow. If what we hear of Paget's resolution and resourcefulness in the first 300 pages is true, then his ready yielding to puerile moralizing in the pages that remain becomes incomprehensible. And if we accept the weak, watery Paget of these last pages as the true Paget, then it is impossible to believe in the prodigies of ingenuity and daring that we see him performing in the earlier pages. In brief, the man before us fails to hang together. Desiring belief in his hero, Mr. Churchill should have either com-

mitted him less firmly to the devil at the start or left him more resistant to the archangels at the finish.

But the book's weakness as a work of art is of less importance, after all, than its light-headedness as a social document. When I say that any of the traveling uplifters who now infest the country might have supplied its point of view, I say enough, I hope, to show its lack of value as a serious criticism of American civilization. If this point of view is the product of Mr. Churchill's adventures into politics in New Hampshire, then those adventures did not carry him very far upon the journey to first causes. His attitude to practical politics is almost identical with that of the horrified newspaper reader, the believer in muckrakers, the amateur reformer. He sees on the one side a small group of soulless and relentless despots, bent upon bringing all power and wealth into their own hands, and he sees on the other side a vast host of patient, hard-driven, helpless slaves, robbed of their birthright by cruel trickery and extortion. The way out, if I understand him rightly, lies in the "awakening" of the former to a sense of their responsibility, a revival of the ideal of service, an abandonment of the philosophy of enlightened self-interest—an idea previously set forth, by the way, in "The Inside of the Cup." The people are unable to lead themselves out of the wilderness, and produce too few leaders of their own stock to manage so huge and perilous an exodus. There must be, then, a stooping down from above, a renaissance of brotherhood, the revival of a more genuine democracy.

A sweet vision! A laudable plan! But in so far as it has been tested in practise, it has revealed, alas! certain fundamental defects, and the chief of those defects lies in the perversity of its beneficiaries. Even the most altruistic of the new social servants, before he may accomplish any service of ponderable value, must first get the co-operation, or at all events the consent, of the folks he would serve—and expe-

rience shows that those folks, when they have a free choice between one who is actually intelligent and honest enough to serve them usefully and one who is merely a self-seeker masquerading in a servant's apron and towel, almost invariably spit into the eye of the former and take the latter to their bosoms. In other words, the common people, with sure instinct, choose the one whose motives and habits of mind most nearly approximate their own—i. e., the one who is most the quack, the ignoramus, the eager *jaeger* of the dollar. If the deliverers of the republic could be selected by some impartial and benevolent despot, then there would be a chance of achieving the delivery in a shipshape and fiduciary manner. But inasmuch as they have to be selected by the mob, which is admittedly so stupid that it doesn't even know what is the matter with it, to say nothing of the prudent process of cure, it follows that the enterprise is full of snares and ambushes, and that its accomplishment will call for brains of a vastly greater horse-power than any now on tap among us.

And the conclusion that we thus reach, as it were, in the chair, and by the austere devices of the science of logic, is amply borne out by the experience piling up on all sides. No business currently resorted to by gentlemen who crave the rewards and excitement of power is more prosperous than the business of saving the dear people from their wrongs and woes unspeakable, the business of the Uplift. The exclusive concern, a few years ago, of clergymen, retired merchant princes, pious old women and other such ineffective dilettanti, it now engages the talents of an increasing army of sharp professionals, each of them bent upon marketing a more attractive bauble than the others and upon wringing from the marketing a more satisfying usufruct. The result, on the one hand, is the wholesale bedazzlement of the plain people, and on the other hand, the wholesale gouging of the plain people. And on the third hand, so to speak, it

is the swift downfall of the few honest men who venture to enter the arena—of the few men actually competent to instruct and serve. What would be the fate, let us ask, of a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States who stepped down from his bench to advise the people regarding the solution of the complex and exasperating liquor problem? What would happen to him if he essayed to pit his knowledge of legal processes and limitations, his practical experience of life, his habit of judicial impartiality against the ecstatic whooping of the trained rabble-rousers of the Anti-Saloon League? What would be the majority against him south of the Potomac—or north of the Potomac? How long would he last, once the gentlemen whose graft he was destroying got their Busy Berthas of invective, of innuendo, of appeals to emotion, ignorance, hatred, into action against him?

No man with any practical experience of American politics will hesitate in giving the answer. He sees before him too many melancholy and horrible examples of the malignant perversity of the populace, of its almost invariable error in judging men, of its endless weakness for the brummagem. The ideal of service, set up to conquer the old ideal of intelligent self-interest, has in a few short years been conquered and engulfed by it. The most successful uplifter of to-day, the one with the largest following and hence the largest power for either good or evil, is precisely the one who practises uplifting as a means of eager self-seeking—the machine politician turned reformer, the itinerant moral evangelist, the slick merchant of new cures for all the sorrows of the world. Mr. Churchill, in his story, shows us something of the effect of the new notions upon the United States Senate—that favorite butt of all the peruna-mongers. Well, let us examine the Senate. Have the changes there made for the national security, the common weal? The old leaders have departed, taking with them their hunkerousness, their reverence for property, their distrust of mob rule—

let us add it frankly: their subservience to wealth and power. But what have we in their places? Honest, intelligent, self-sacrificing, patriotic men? Hardly. What we have is a camorra of the most impudent and dunderheaded quacks that ever gathered under one roof—an obscene collection of tin-pot Savonarolas and bogus Messiahs, each trying to engage and enchant the people with *his* merchandise, *his* sovereign remedy—a crowd of Munyons and male Lydia Pinkhams whom it would be a gross flattery to call earnest, and sheer lunacy to call intelligent. If you doubt it, go ask any old-time Washington newspaper correspondent. He will tell you that there are not twenty men in the Senate to-day who put the public good above their private political advantage, and not ten whose discussion of public problems on the floor rises above the empty windjamming of an elocutionist in a Chautauqua.

Yet practically all of these men, as I say, are recognized uplifters. Practically all of them were washed into office by the wave of the new madness. They are not the agents and attorneys of the Money Power, the Interests, the Invisible Government, as their predecessors of fifteen years ago were; they are the products of the direct primary, the rule of the people, the New Freedom. Each was chosen, consciously and deliberately, to help rescue the people from the old oligarchy; each wears at his belt the scalp of one of the old oligarchs. But what is the bunch worth? Not a continental damn. The people, having their free choice of gentlemen sworn to their service, picked out in almost every case the one least fitted to serve them prudently, faithfully and effectively. Called to discharge their supreme duty as citizens, they yielded, as always, to their immemorial hatred of the superior man, and so selected petty men to do their work for them. This immemorial hatred turns the whole theory of service into something hollow and vain. Such a man as Paget could not hope to accomplish anything for the people, save he stooped to a pretense of accepting

their own delusions. They would distrust him more, being on their side, than ever they distrusted him when he was against them. Pitted against a rival rescuer to their taste—*i. e.*, one spouting imbecilities and pledged to impossibilities—he would be exposed inevitably to humiliation and defeat.

The answer that the optimists make to all this is that, despite its obvious and admitted failures, the Uplift still makes for a better day—that, even though there has been a good deal of slipping back, there has still been, of late, a very appreciable going ahead. Here, I am convinced, optimism falls into one of its characteristic errors. That is to say, it makes so much of the little that has been gained that it is blind to the much that has been lost. The truth is that there is a vast exaggeration of the value of the changes that have taken place, just as there was a vast exaggeration of the evils they have abolished. Too much confidence has taken the place of too much suspicion. The common people, even in the worst times of their exploitation, were probably quite as well off as they are to-day, with their fate largely in their own hands and a horde of mountebanks preying upon their credulity, their lack of sound vision and their easy emotionalism. What has Georgia gained by going dry? What has Oregon gained by scotching a legislature of a few score ignorant and vulnerable men and setting up a legislature of even more ignorant and vulnerable thousands? Is Colorado, with woman suffrage, a more civilized state than Indiana, without it? What is the net value, to sound and orderly government, of the twenty years of Bryanism? What has it profited the republic to turn such men as Hale and Aldrich out of the Senate and such men as Work and Kenyon in? Is the average "reform" boss, say in Virginia or Pennsylvania, a safer leader or a decenter man than the machine boss he has displaced? Is the Anti-Saloon League, taking one day's work with another, an influence for cleaner politics, for better thought

of the ultimate public welfare, for the selection of more clear-headed and honorable lawmakers, than the Pennsylvania Railroad?

I doubt it, Messieurs. And doubting it, I arrive at a low, sniffish opinion of the whole rumble-bumble of the Uplift. It has failed in all directions. It has failed no less in its dealing with such vexatious social problems as prostitution than in its dealing with such capital political problems as taxation. No business is so badly run as the public business. No other "experts," not even the alienists who glower at one another in murder trials, are such arrant frauds as the "experts" who arise on all sides to tell the people how this or that department of it should be conducted. The reason is not far to seek. It lies, as I have said, in the fact that these "experts" are judged and selected, not by their actual competency, but by their capacity for producing an illusion of competency in the minds of the people—in other words, by their capacity for convincing persons who are admittedly incompetent to judge. In this enterprise, it goes without saying, the quack has all the advantages, for so long as he makes his doctrine charming it is immaterial whether he also makes it true. The honest man cannot hope to compete with him. On the one hand, this honest man can never promise half so much, for the more he actually knows of the problem he discusses, the more he must be impressed by the limitations set upon all human knowledge. And on the other hand, he cannot hope to offer his hearers much enchantment, for the truth is seldom, if ever, charming. Thus the quack prospers like a hog in a cornfield, and the grunt of his satisfaction is heard in the land. And thus we shall be quack-ridden and folly-ridden until mobocracy comes to its unescapable *débâcle*, and the common people are relieved of their present oppressive duty of deciding what is wrong with their tummies, and what doctor is safest for them to consult, and which of his pills is most apt to cure them.

Here I have filled pages with a sol-

emn treatise upon austere and ineffable subjects—and quite forgotten Mr. Churchill's novel! But, after all, I have really had it in mind the whole time, for it, too, deals grandly with those subjects, and if their discussion be taken out of it not much will remain. It is, in fact, much less a work of the imagination than a piece of pamphleteering, and if it fails as the latter it fails even more certainly as the former. The story that Mr. Churchill tells is not only incoherent and unconvincing; it is also quite uninteresting. It is heavy with small details, but they are details that burden the reader without either enlightening him or diverting him. Page follows page and chapter follows chapter, finely printed, laborious and meticulous, but at the end one sees Hugh Paget only dimly. What are his vices? What is his notion of beauty? What is his view of women, the sex war? Who are his heroes at forty-five? Reading the book from end to end, I get no satisfactory answers to these questions. Paget passes through it like a shadow, one never sees clearly into his soul, one never comes to actual grips with him. Nor is there any charm in its writing to mask this fundamental lack. Mr. Churchill's style is the negation of style. He writes correct English, and that is all. Like his hero, he seems to be deficient in the æsthetic sense. His view of life and its wondrous mystery is the ethical, the Puritan view. He is far too good an American to be an artist.

Almost at the other pole is Joseph Hergesheimer, whose second novel, "MOUNTAIN BLOOD" (*Kennerley*), shows an unmistakable feeling for literary form and color, whatever its deficiencies as a record of human transactions. His scene is one of the remote valleys beyond the Shenandoah river, and his hero, as in his first book, is a rural Prometheus who struggles vainly and tragically against the bonds which bind him to his rock. This rebel bears the name of Gordon Makimmon: he is the last descendant of Scotch Highlanders who invaded the mountains of

Virginia in the days before the Revolution. Two contrary impulses, or rather an impulse and a weakness, are at war in this hardy stock. The impulse is toward that thrilling and boundless freedom which is to be found only in the hills. The weakness is an incapacity for grappling successfully with the superior discipline and realism of the man from the plains. One finds this conflict in all hillmen. It explains the peculiar national character of the Swiss, who are both the proudest people in Europe and the most subservient—a race of kings and waiters. It explains, too, the Norwegians, as you will discover by studying Ibsen's "Brand." The hillman would rather die than yield his neck, but nine times out of ten, when the fatter, softer plainsman tracks him to his crags, he has to do both.

The specific combat that Mr. Hergesheimer sets before us is between Makimmon's somewhat muddled idealism and the sharp, merciless materialism of the Sassenachs who have invaded his native wild. In the first clash he is easily bested: the very roof over his head, in fact, is taken from him. But now the sheer romance of his battle wins him a sudden, and, at the start, apparently overwhelming advantage: the daughter of his chief opponent falls in love with him, and, marrying her, he gets into his hands the weapons of the enemy. But this advantage soon turns out to be illusory. Wars are not fought with weapons alone, but with patience, foresight, pertinacity, and these are qualities that Mackimmon cannot bring to the job before him. In the end we see him unhorsed and helpless, a tragic victim of irresistible forces. . . . The story, as I say, is well written. A poetic glamour hangs around it. One feels, reading it, that it is not merely the tale of one man's life and death, but a picture of an ancient and perhaps eternal conflict, an attempt to swing upon a small canvas a brush containing one or two comet's hairs. Now and then, true enough, Mr. Hergesheimer allows his hand to wobble a bit; there are times when Mackim-

mon becomes so much the yokel that he begins to lose plausibility as the idealist. But in the main it is a sound piece of work, and allowing for all its defects, it still greatly surpasses its predecessor. The author, if he is diligent, will go much farther.

The other novels of the month I find less engrossing. "MERRY ANDREW," by Keble Howard (*Lane*), is a light and agreeable, but by no means very illuminating, study of a young literary gentleman's conquest of Grub Street. "HEPSEY BURKE," by F. N. Weston (*Fly*), is a watery second boiling of "David Harum," by the brother of the author of that forgotten best-seller. "SUNDOWN SLIM," by H. H. Knibbs (*Houghton*), is a melodrama of the cow country, with comic relief. "THE BROCKLEBANK RIDDLE," by Hubert Wales (*Century*), is a tale of mystery with a flavor of the occult. "THE LADY AFT," by Richard Hallet (*Small-Maynard*), is a capital yarn of the sea. "THE TAMING OF ZENAS HENRY," by Sara Ware Bassett (*Doran*), is a comedy of Cape Cod folk. "THE MILLIONAIRE," by Michael Artzibasheff (*Huebsch*), is a collection of two novelles and a short story by the author of "Sanine." And "JAFFERY," by William J. Locke (*Lane*)—ah, that I could give you a better account of "Jaffery"! But critics, like clergymen, must sometimes tell the truth, and the truth here is that "Jaffery" has affected me like the Twilight Sleep. Not even an Albanian heroine who swears like a printing-office foreman and yearns for close quarters with the knife—not even this astounding lady is sufficient to conceal the artificiality of it, the staleness of it, the tediousness of it. Locke must learn new tricks, or go his way. His old ones have worn out. . . .

Which brings us, at the end, to a few words about the late Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, the papa of *Kultur*. The second volume of "THE LIFE OF NIETZSCHE," by his sister, Frau Förster-Nietzsche (*Sturgis-Walton*), is chiefly given over to long accounts of his endless and meaningless rows with

his friends. Only one of these friends, a second-rate composer and pamphleteer named Bernhard Cron (better known by his *nom de plume* of Peter Gast) seems to have been on good terms with him continuously during the last twenty years of his life. So early as 1878 one finds Gast copying and arranging the manuscript of "Human, All-Too Human," and in 1900 one finds him making the principal speech at Nietzsche's funeral. All the rest of the early Nietzscheans, at one time or other, found the actual Nietzsche too stiff a dose to swallow—Overbeck, Rée, von Seydlitz, von Gersdorff, "Fräulein von Meysenbug," even Frau Förster-Nietzsche herself. The cause is easy to see. On the one hand Nietzsche made acquaintances and offered confidences far too recklessly, and on the other hand he gave far too willing an ear to idle gossip and backbiting. Attractive to women, by reason of his reputation as a diabolist, he was forever succumbing to their blandishments. Thus it was that he fell a prey to the young Russian duellist of sex, Mlle. Lou Salomé (what a name!), who bamboozled him into mistaking her for a new Mme. de Staël, and then laughed at him and told tales about him, and brought him to the verge of fisticuffs with Dr. Paul Rée, and made a fool of him in many other ways. The whole Salomé episode is Rabelaisian comedy. Scarcely less farcical is Nietzsche's choice of such a God-fearing old maid as Fräulein von Meysenbug as a reservoir for his confidences. The von Meysenbug was sincerely fond of him, and she made a brave effort to understand his ideas, but some of them were as far beyond her comprehension as the theory of least squares, and so her friendship was a drag upon him and helped to fill him with the notion that he was isolated and persecuted.

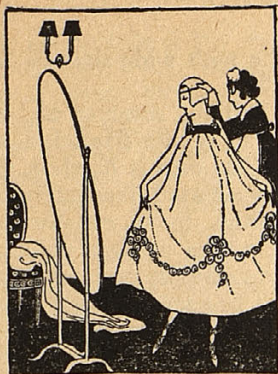
As a matter of fact, Nietzsche gained recognition very quickly—more quickly, perhaps, than any other intellectual revolutionist in history. The first thin volume of the first book of his philosophical canon, "Human, All-

Too Human," was not printed until 1878, and yet in 1883, but five years afterward, the most influential living critic, Dr. Georg Brandes, was already converted to his ideas and beginning the work of spreading them. On February 14 of the same year Nietzsche wrote to his publisher: "I hear . . . from Vienna, as well as from Berlin, that there is a good deal of talk about me among the intellectuals." At this time, remember, his greatest work, "Thus Spake Zarathustra," was yet to be published, and so were the two works embodying the clearest statement of his fundamental doctrines, "Beyond Good and Evil" and "The Genealogy of Morals." Moreover, nearly all of his books already in type were no more than fragmentary and unconnected pamphlets, privately printed and very imperfectly circulated. To speak, then, of "the lonely Nietzsche," as Frau Förster-Nietzsche does, is more than a little absurd. He was lonely only in the sense that he lacked the faculty of making true and sympathetic private friends; in the public sense he got a response the moment he opened his mouth, and though there was the usual flood of attacks by champions of the orthodox platitudes, a large number of defenders met them and disposed of them, and long before he lost his mind, in 1890, he was a celebrated man.

More interesting than Nietzsche's childish sparring with Rée, Overbeck and the Salomé wench is the story of his historic feud with Richard Wagner. That feud had its origin in his naïf belief in Wagner's pretensions as a philosopher. When the composer of "Lohengrin" set up shop as an exponent of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche took in the resultant fustian with the utmost innocence, and believed that he had met a fellow-spirit, nay, a heaven-sent master. This, of course, was sheer folly. Wagner was not a philosopher, but an artist, and all he looked for in philosophical ideas was some sort of specious support for his grandiose artistic conceptions. Engaged upon the Ring, he found what he wanted in Schopenhauer's exaltation

of the will. But when he came to "Parsifal" he turned quite naturally to the gaudy mysticism and ritualism of Christianity, and so he made shift to be a Christian. He imparted the news of his conversion to Nietzsche during a long walk at Sorrento, in the autumn of 1876, and poor Nietzsche was quite bowled over. Unable to differentiate between the philosophical quack and the great artist, he came to the conclusion that Wagner's music must be quite as dishonest as Wagner's Christianity, and he spent the rest of his life denouncing it extravagantly and ridiculously, and laid the foundation of his fame as one of the worst music critics that ever lived.

Frau Förster-Nietzsche's book goes into all these sad affairs in great detail—in detail so intolerably great, indeed, that some of its chapters are anything but easy reading. Her view-point is essentially feminine: she is always more interested in her brother's petty personal affairs than in his ideas. When she undertakes to expound the latter she usually runs aground, as, for example, when she tackles the discrepancy between his prophecy of the superman and his bitter attacks upon the evolutionary hypothesis of Charles Darwin. As a matter of fact, Nietzsche borrowed much from Darwin, and his disinclination to admit it was due in part to his extreme intellectual vanity, in part to his ignorance of (and hence impatience with) biology, and in part to his general contempt for Englishmen, whom he ranked even lower than Germans. He was fond of grouping Englishmen with women, Socialists and cows; their fondness for democracy, or, at any rate, for the forms and phrases of democracy, drove him into a rage. Even English cooking disgusted him: he called it "a return to cannibalism." . . . For all this scorn the inhabitants of the tight little island repay him with compound interest. All things vile are now ascribed to him over there; the adjective Nietzschean becomes of even more sinister significance than American.



In the Shops of the Smart Set

By Jeanne Judson



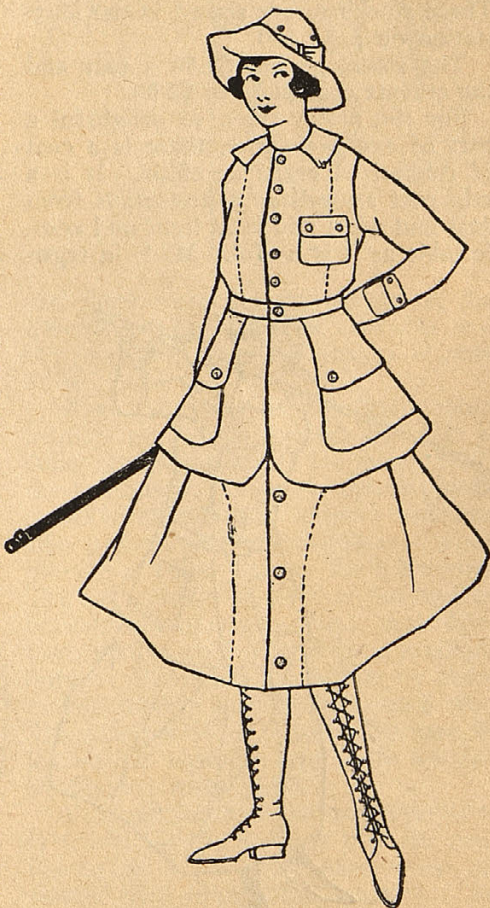
If you are interested in advance information, not only about the mode, but about things novel, dainty and useful, to be found in New York's best shops, you will read the following pages with pleasure and profit. We will be glad to tell you where any of these articles can be found, or we will purchase them for you if you desire. Simply address your inquiry to The Smart Set Shop Department, and be sure to enclose stamped, addressed envelope for reply.

TODAY every woman is a sports-woman, more or less. The smarter she is, the more of a sports-woman does she become. Women's sports range from swimming, tennis and golf to trout fishing and on even to wild-game hunting in Africa.

But even in sports the sovereignty of dress is never forgotten. To indulge in tennis, golf, fishing or hunting, Milady must be properly attired.

Here at last in a matter of feminine apparel Paris is left behind, and even England, where sports were first taken up by women, and from whence come many of the fabrics from which these garments are made, has allowed New York to take first place in the designing of sports garments for women.

The shooting costume shown here is the design of a shop on Thirty-sixth street, not far, of course, from Fifth Avenue. It is of moleskin cloth. The skirt is short, circular and widely flaring. It buttons down the front and has a wide bias pocket on each side. The coat has commodious pockets and a padded gun rest on the shoulder. This suit costs \$45.00. The same model in thornproof tweed is \$60.00. The hat shown in the illustration is dark brown, also of the moleskin. It has a soft crown and flexible brim. It is \$7.00. The suit shown on page 158 is designed for golfing. It is of



tan or gray suede and affords fine protection from wind, though it is re-

markably soft and flexible. This suit will be very popular for late fall wear. The collar is of corduroy. The coat and skirt can be purchased separately, and each cost \$16.50. The hat shown in the sketch is of brown suede, with a soft crown and stiff brim, faced with green. There is a stitched green band around the crown. The hat costs \$12.00.

Another hat which would be suitable for either of these costumes is of felt, Alpine shaped with a pheasant feather.

A shop on Fifth Avenue shows wool golf stockings in large diamond plaids or bias stripes in almost any color combination desired. Cravats in the same colors and design are worn with these. These stockings are shown in the illustration on page 160.

The stockings are \$4.50 a pair and the cravats cost \$1.50 to \$2.00.

For the motor trips, so delightful a part of every summer, there is a coat of rubberized crepe de chine. It is a rain coat as well as a protection from dust and wind and is as light and comfortable as it is useful. Made in regu-

lar slip-on style with wide sleeves. The price is \$30.00.

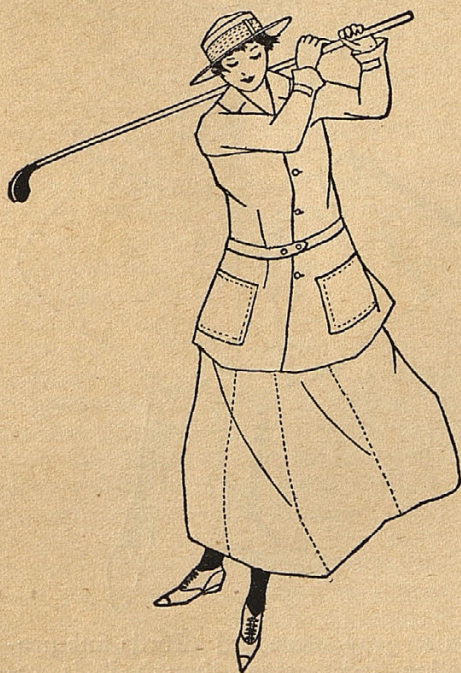
A splendid suit for summer and early fall wear is of Viella flannel, a new suit material. The coat is Norfolk style and may be purchased separately and worn with white linen or corduroy skirts. Viella comes in plain colors, in black and white stripes, or in dark colored stripes. The coat costs \$22.50 and the skirt \$15.00. With such a costume one can wear one of the patent leather sport hats, sailor shaped and faced with colored straw. These cost \$10.00.

LIMOUSINE CASES

For the motor trip or week-end nothing could be more useful than the little limousine case illustrated on page 160. It is of Morocco leather, lined with watered silk in any color desired, and contains ten toilet pieces of Parisian ivory: a brush, comb, mirror, powder box, file, tooth brush tube, paste tube and talcum powder tube. It unfolds flat and has a ring at the top so that it may be hung up in a hotel room. The sides fasten securely down with clasps and there is a handle to carry it. When folded it is not so large as many shopping bags. These cost \$9.00. A smaller case with nine fittings may be had for \$5.00.

PREDICTIONS FOR FALL

Predictions for the fall fashions, while still somewhat uncertain, show two things quite surely. One is that the full lines will continue in skirts and coats, and the other (not so cheering to her of the rounded throat) that the low collars which have been partially maintained in deference to the warm weather, will entirely give way to high, very high stocks. These will be seen on frocks, blouses, suits and coats. Many of the latter will have high stocks buttoning straight up the front with large, flat buttons. Many of the fall suit coats will have a quite well defined natural waist line and flaring skirts, and no suit will be complete without a fetching white collar and cuff set. These have already made



their appearance in the shops. The collars are high stocks with flowing jabots. One of these illustrated on this page is of fine thread lace with a flower border design. The long jabot is made with a flat tucked piece in the center and a full pleated frill on each side. This set is \$5.95. Others of various laces may be had for \$3.90 up.

Another set for summer wear, still maintaining that low necks are vogue, has a round collar of silk net and deep cuffs, with a full fluted border. These cost \$3.50. Or one may buy them in white with the fluting in deep rose, blue or black for \$3.25 a set.

"SHADOW PROTECTOR"

In spite of the full skirts many women have not become fully reconciled to petticoats for summer wear. Hence the shadow protector—two strips of white muslin of skirt length, connected on each side by bands of white satin ribbon, and fastened at the top to an elastic band which will fit any waist. The price is \$1.95.

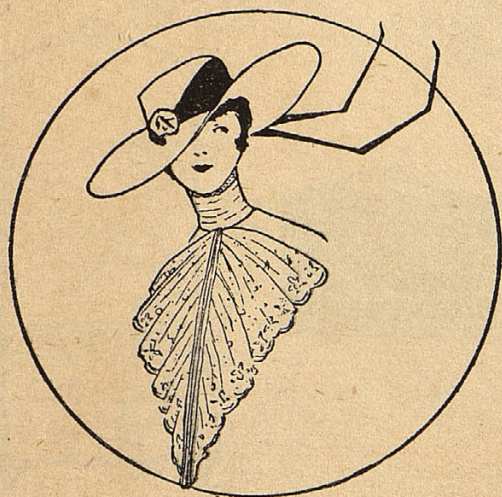
In a shop on Fifth Avenue where I had gone to purchase some lingerie for a woman living in the middle West, I saw a night robe, so exceptionally pretty that I must describe it here. Made of satin stripe crepe, it had a low round neck and tiny shoulder sleeves. The neck was trimmed with cluny lace



and there were flat satin bows on the shoulders. The gown is washable and the price for all its daintiness is only \$4.95.

What may be called a bath room laundry set for the summer traveller is being shown by one of the lower Fifth Avenue shops. It will be much appreciated by women who want to wash out silk gloves and handkerchiefs when there is not time to wait for a laundry. The set consists of six tiny clothespins of celloloid and two glass push buttons, with a cord wound on a celloloid holder. These are encased in an automobile leather holder lined with silk. The price is \$2.50. A similar case of leather or tapestry and with wooden clothespins costs \$1.00.

Although there are innumerable pretty frocks for the summer girl, the popularity of suits will never wane no matter how warm the weather. To satisfy this demand, Palm Beach cloth and linen have been fashioned into



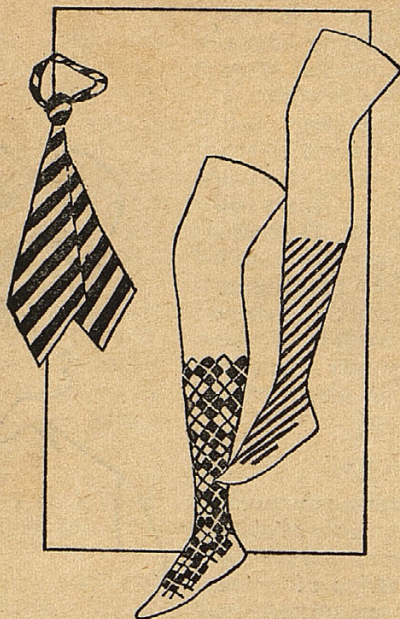
smart tailored suits, as cool as a frock could be. These are made with Norfolk coats or with flaring coats, belted with suede in the same or a contrasting color to the suit, and they may be purchased as low as \$10.00. There are suits with ratine coats to be worn with linen skirts. The coats are in bright plaids or checks, rose and gray, or brown and white. The skirts are plain white with a deep fold of the check around the bottom. These cost \$10.00.

But while the summer girl is thus arrayed, the fashion authorities have already decided the proper fabrics and fashions for fall and winter.

Among these are "Autoware," a new cloth for sport coats, and Nutria, a fur cloth resembling Hudson seal. One Fifth Avenue house has designed a coat for winter called the "Avenu." It is made of "Avenu" cloth and trimmed with the Nutria fur. It comes in either green or brown. It is three-quarters length, made with natural waist line and flaring skirts, and the highest of high stock collars buttoned up the front with large flat pearl buttons. Large pockets on each side of the coat are made to stand out in a manner that indicates they are not meant for very practical use.

Dracor is another fur-like material for winter coats, and monkey skin cloth promises to be very popular also.

Milady's gloves have followed the example of her shoes and have come out in most frivolous guise. An exclusive glove shop on Fifth Avenue is showing many new designs. A white silk street glove is embroidered with black and the edges of wrist and hand are piped with black. It has two clasps and sells for



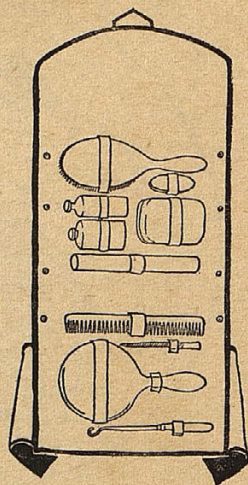
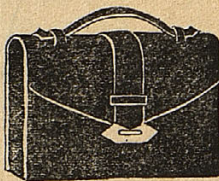
\$1.00. Another glove to be worn with short sleeved blouses is in Milanese silk with a silk lace arm. The back is embroidered in Paris point. This glove comes in black or white, 10-button length for \$1.50. A short glove of black silk with white Paris point embroidered back, white piping on wrist and white fourchettes, costs \$1.00.

The gloves for later wear are given fanciful names. The Langtry is of white, tan, covert, or navy blue kid, with turn over cuff of contrasting color and two-tone

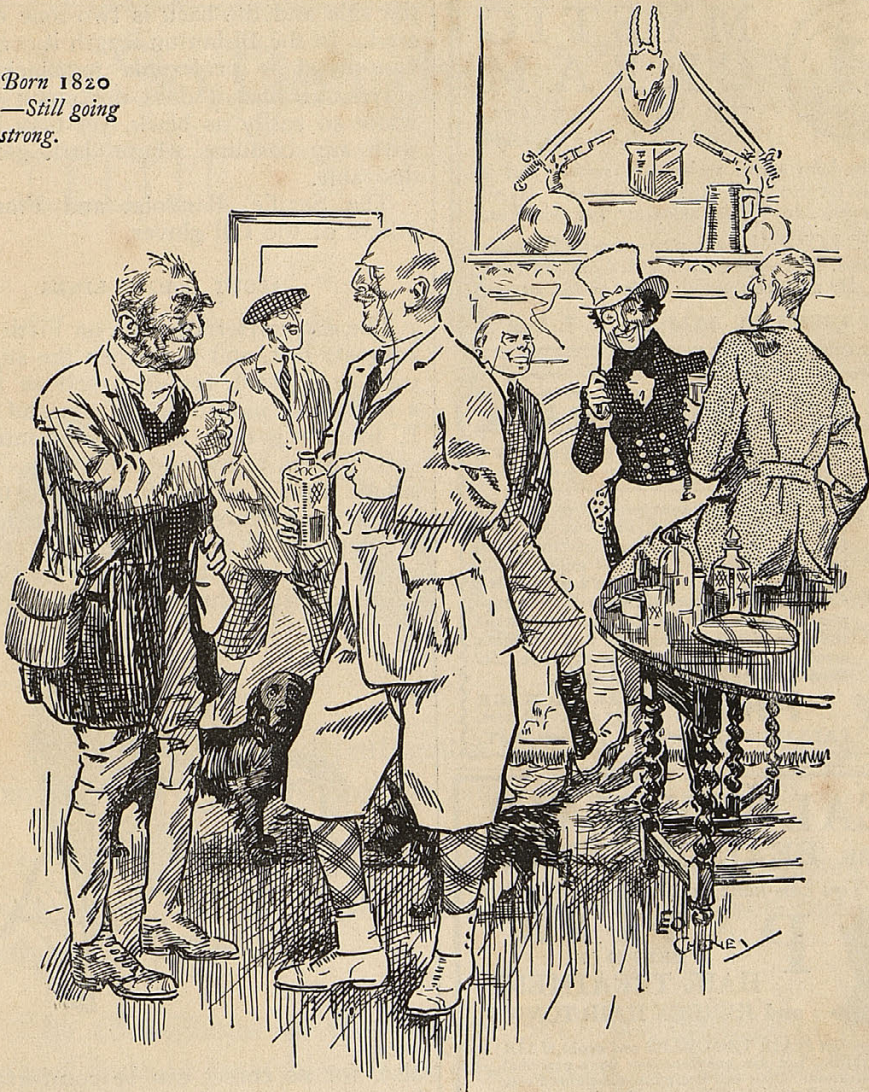
embroidered back. The price is \$2.50. The Roberta is of white kid with stitching of contrasting color, 2 pearl clasps for \$2.25.

A one-clasp gray mocha glove, unlined, with spear-point embroidery, costs 75c. With silk lining it is \$1.85. Florine is a gun-metal kid glove with contrasting stitching and two clasps. It costs \$2.00.

The Newport is a glove which comes
(Continued on second page following)



*Born 1820
—Still going
strong.*



Master (watching the smile of satisfaction on his keeper's face): "THAT, SANDY, IS 10-YEAR-OLD RED LABEL 'JOHNNIE WALKER' OUT OF THE NON-REFILLABLE BOTTLE."

Keeper (smacking his lips with satisfaction): "G-R-AND! BUT IT'S VERRA SMALL FOR ITS AGE."

The wonderful "Johnnie Walker" non-refillable bottle is of next importance to the superior quality of "Johnnie Walker" Whisky, because it ensures that you get the quality as it left the distillery.

Every drop of "Johnnie Walker" Red Label Whisky, which will be offered for sale in 1915, was put into our own reserve stock, in bond, in 1904 or before that date.

GUARANTEED SAME QUALITY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

Agents: WILLIAMS & HUMBERT, 1158 Broadway, NEW YORK

JOHN WALKER & SONS, LTD., WHISKY DISTILLERS, KILMARNOCK.



MYSTIC CREAM

THE IDEAL "GREASE-LESS" TOILET CREAM

Takes the burn out of sunburn in summer and is marvelous for chaps and roughness in winter. At all Drug Stores, 25c. Write today for free trial box.

MYSTIC LOTION, a new preparation for Excessive Perspiration. No need of Dress Shields if you use Mystic Lotion. By mail, postpaid on receipt of 35c. stamps.

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ALLEN'S FOOT-EASE

The Antiseptic Powder to Shake Into Your Shoes



Over 100,000 packages are being used by the German and Allied troops at the front. It rests the feet, prevents friction, blisters, Corns and Bunions and makes walking or standing easy. **Don't go to the California Expositions** without a supply of Allen's Foot-Ease. It gives instant relief to tired, aching feet and prevents swollen, hot feet. Sold everywhere, 25c. **Don't accept any substitute.**

"Oh! What Rest and Comfort"

FREE TRIAL PACKAGE sent by mail. Address, ALLEN S. OLMSTED, Le Roy, N. Y.

HEALTHY HAIR means BEAUTIFUL HAIR

You can have both. Try the



PARKER
METHOD OF
HAIR TREATMENT
and HERBEX HAIR TONICS

They correct HAIR TROUBLES and avoid HAIR WORRIES. Let me convince you by a practical demonstration. Hair and Scalp Examinations Free. Write for P. Booklet on "Healthy Hair."

FRANK PARKER, 51 West 37th St., N. Y.

French "Necessaries" For Milady's Own Room

8-inch dolls, Colonial heads, quaint brocade and lace gowns, with five pockets in petticoat to hold needles, thread, buttons, tape, etc.each \$5.00
Knitting Bags in basket design, to carry on arm, chintz trimmed with gold braid..... 3.00
Same design in brocade, each....\$5.00 and 6.00
Glass Bon Bon Jars, brocade covered, gold lace and French trimming..... 3.00
Telephone Elbow Cushions.....\$3.00 and up
Sent for approval upon receipt of price.

HELEN W. McKEY

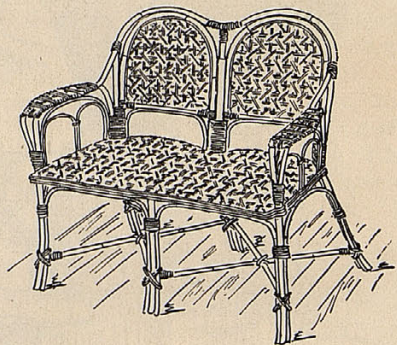
31 Westbourne Road, Box 10, Newton Center, Mass.

in either white or gun-metal. It laces up the side and the back is two-tone embroidered. In the 10-button length it costs \$3.50. Gun-metal is preferable to black in kid gloves, because it does not crack or show white so easily as black, yet may be worn with any costume where dark gloves are desirable.

The Seville, Bandolet and Florine are others of the fall gloves.

ABOUT CORSET LINES

The early afternoon sun on Fifth Avenue suggests rest, and just when the suggestion was strongest I found myself in front of a little gray mouse of a shop, and yielded. It was very easy in the cool interior of soft French gray and mulberry, with its simple classic Adam furnishings to spend an hour or more discussing the new corset lines. "With us comfort comes always first," said the manager of this shop. "And to insure that service must come first



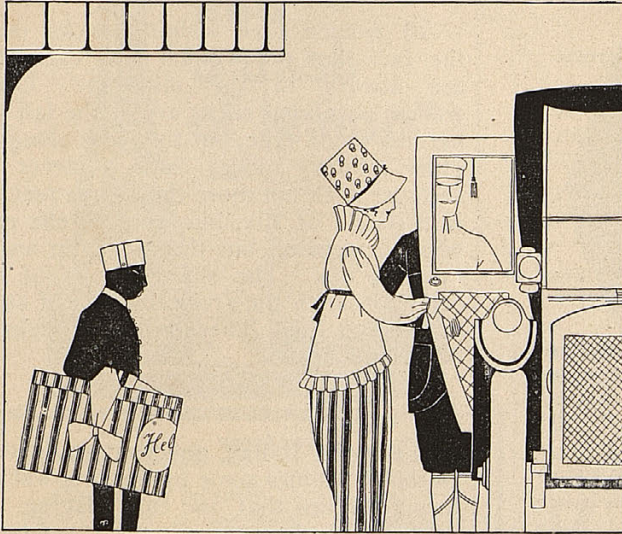
also, for no corset can be comfortable unless it is properly fitted. We have corsets at every price from \$3.50 up, but we give the same service no matter what the customer buys, and never sell an expensive model, when a cheaper one is more suited to the figure.

"As to the new lines—the waist curves in quite preceptibly, but hips are still in abeyance, and backs are flat while the "straight front" is once more correct form. The bust too is just a wee bit higher than formerly."

Then she showed me a number of exquisitely dainty brassieres, and "bust confiners" absolutely necessary for the achievement of the correct figure—of silk, linen

(Continued on second page following.)

"It Is So Delightful To Shop"



'In the Shops of the Smart Set'

"You take such genuine interest in the things one wants to buy."

The above is quoted from the letter of a woman in Texas who has often made use of "In the Shops of the Smart Set."

The success of this department is built on just this principle of genuine interest in every shopping commission large or small.

It not only brings the shops of Fifth Avenue to the doors of every woman in America, but it adds to that the skill and taste of experienced shoppers.

"In the Shops of the Smart Set" is a message of shop news and fashions from New York's best shops to America's most exacting women, printed monthly in the Smart Set Magazine.

No matter what you want to buy—"In the Shops of the Smart Set" will find it for you.

Send stamped addressed envelope with every inquiry.

In the Shops of the Smart Set

331 Fourth Avenue - - - - - New York

All Cigarettes are pure, but —

purity alone doesn't make a cigarette SENSIBLE.

We don't know of a single one of our competitors who doesn't make his cigarettes of pure tobacco.

But a pure cigarette that didn't *taste* just right wouldn't do for *you*, would it?

And to be really *sensible* a cigarette must give you *more* than purity and a good taste.

It must be *cool* and friendly to your throat and tongue. And it must leave you feeling fine after smoking all you want.

Fatimas are not the only cigarettes that measure up to all these requirements. There are other sensible ones.

But Fatimas seem to have a big margin in their favor on their *good taste*. Otherwise they could not outsell all other cigarettes costing over 5c.

You can't tell whether they will just suit *your* taste until you try them.

And while you're trying Fatima's taste, just notice also how cool and comfortable—how *sensible*—they are.

Most men who try Fatimas say "Good Bye!" to all other cigarettes right away. That's why Fatimas sell so fast.

Why don't *you* try Fatimas today?

Liggatt & Myers Tobacco Co.

20 Distinctively Individual
FATIMAS 15c



FATIMA

THE TURKISH BLEND

Cigarette

and lace and embroidery strong enough to accomplish their object, yet so light that they add nothing to the weight of one's clothing.

MILADY'S WALKING STICK

All women love walking sticks despite the fact that the women who carry them are always in the minority. Usually women's walking sticks are of the tall shepherdess-crook type, but this year along with other military modes came a clever little swagger stick not more than three feet long, in a sheath of silk, like an umbrella cover, which covers all but the metal tip and the crooked top. The silk cover is of plain color to match the frock, or it is of striped or checked silk. These swagger sticks cost \$2.50 and up.

FURNITURE FROM ITALY

From the Italian government school at Barbisano comes some of the prettiest summer furniture that one can imagine. The workers in these shops are wonderfully skilled and produce remarkable effects in reed and willow, stained and enameled in shades of green, gray and white. Unfortunately the war has cut off the supply, but there is one shop on Forty-second street where the furniture may still be purchased. It is not porch furniture, though it may be used for the porch in summer. It is rather particularly adapted to dainty breakfast room, bedroom or boudoir use.

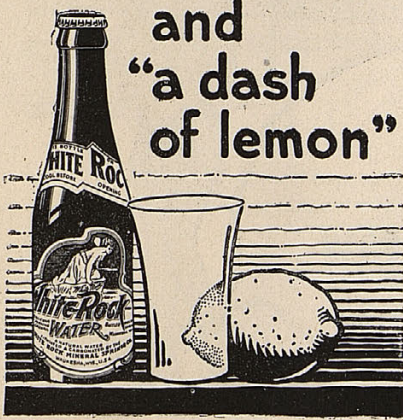
In design no attempt is made to imitate or reproduce any "Period," but with all its simplicity it is decidedly original and attractive in design.

The settle shown in the picture on the preceding page is especially attractive in design and costs only \$21.00.

No matter where you live you can always avail yourself of the best that the New York shops have to offer, through the Shopping Service which THE SMART SET has established. Or if you live in the city you can save time by making use of this department which is designed for the convenience of all of our readers. We will purchase anything for sale in New York City upon receipt of its retail price, or if the cost is unknown to you, we will price the same and hold it for you until the requisite amount is received. Every article described in this department is guaranteed to be as represented. This service is at your disposal free of charge.

White Rock

"The World's Best Table Water"



and
"a dash
of lemon"

"Bath House 23" "Keep Out"

Our Latest Novelty

Bath house in genuine wood veneer with swinging door and brass fastener; size, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ x7 inches; with the door open you see a beautiful hand-colored picture (6x9) of an Ostend bathing girl. Comes boxed, prepaid, for \$1.00 to introduce our new catalog of Pictures for The Den, "all winners!" Catalog alone, 10c. Stamps accepted.



CELEBRITY ART CO.

31 Columbus Ave., Boston, Mass.

NEW BINGHAM

Cor. 11th & Market Streets

European
Plan

Philadelphia
Pa.



Better Than Ever

Thoroughly Modernized
Remodeled and Equipped
NEW MANAGEMENT

Cafe and Roof Garden

In Connection

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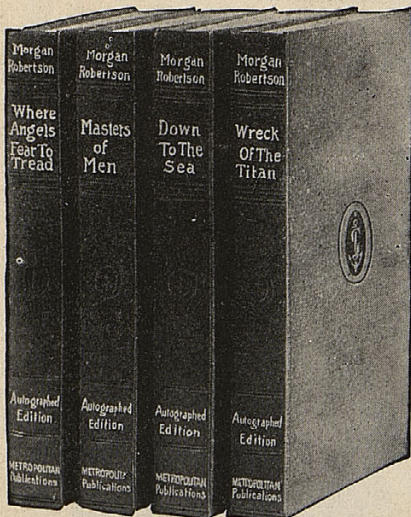
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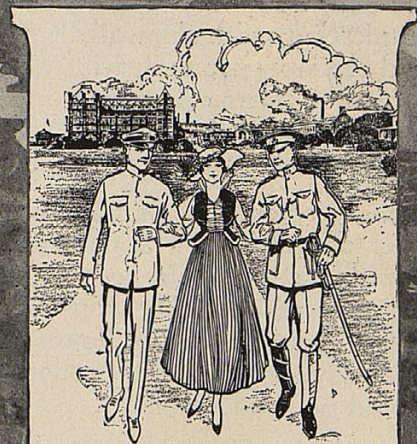
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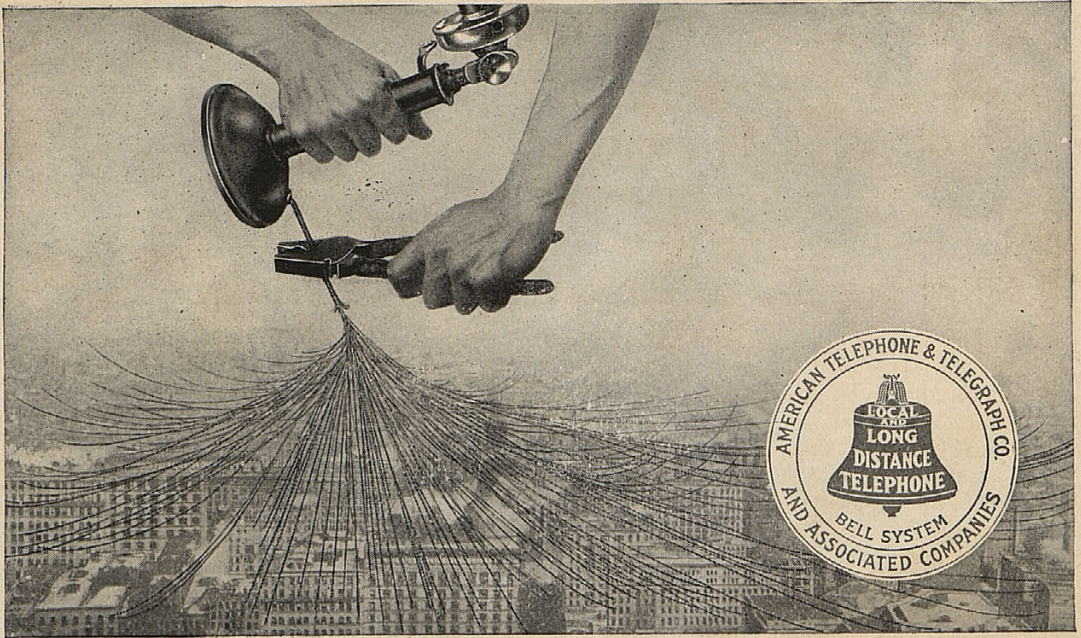
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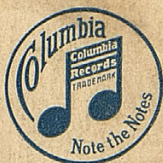
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